



TRUTH DISPLAYED:

IN A SERIES OF

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES,

ILLUSTRATED AND ENFORCED BY

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

IN THREE PARTS.

- I. ON THE EXISTENCE AND PERFECTIONS OF THE DEITY.
- II. ON THE MATERIAL OR VISIBLE UNIVERSE.
- III. ON THE NATURE AND ESSENCE OF THE FINITE MIND.

BY BENJAMIN OSBORN.

“ Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

St. Paul.

RUTLAND, VT.

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District of Vermont, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the fifteenth day of April, in the fortieth year of the Independence of the United (L. s.) States of America, Benjamin Osborn of the said District, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit:

“Truth Displayed: in a series of elementary principles, illustrated and enforced by practical observations. In three parts. I. On the existence and perfections of the Deity. II. On the material or visible universe. III. On the nature and essence of the finite mind. By Benjamin Osborn. ‘Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.’ St. Paul.”

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JESSE GOVE,

Clerk of the District of Vermont.

A true copy of record,

Examined and sealed by

J. GOVE, *Clerk.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE design of this volume, which is now presented to the publick, is to exhibit a concise, but comprehensive, view of what relates to the CERTAIN REALITY, and the GENERAL NATURE, of the most *important objects of perception*, in the UNIVERSAL SYSTEM of *infinite and finite existence, power, and agency*. The whole, being the effect of deliberate and serious study, continued through a length of years, is executed on a plan, INTIRELY NEW: in which, ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES are thoroughly investigated, and impartially traced to their ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES; forming one connected system of TRUTH, most interesting and important to all perceptive beings, who are attended with the *possibility of being happy*. And since *all*, who will ever have an opportunity of looking into the following pages, will be comprehended in this description; therefore, *every reader*, in order to have a proper understanding of what they contain, must, with candid and solemn attention, peruse the *whole*; through all parts of which, he will find the *leading principles* to be interwoven, and to be of such a nature, as to admit of a very extensive application. And he must be very careful to take the exact meaning of the *terms*, by which those principles are expressed, according to the *precise signification*, in which they are used by the writer; who, on account of the great imperfection of common language, has been constrained (rather than to introduce intirely new words) to appropriate some terms to a use, very different from that, to which they have been generally applied. All such terms, however, as may be comprised in this description, are, in the course of this work, definitely explained, and constantly employed, as often as there is occasion of their being introduced, in the same uniform sense, as the explanation of each term respectively requires. And, also, in *some in-*

stances, the writer has found it, from the nature of the subject, to be very convenient, at least, if not absolutely necessary, to introduce, instead of *words*, consisting of letters and syllables, certain *particular marks* or *characters*, which, with a little attention to the *explanation*, that will be given, will be easily understood.

In perusing what is contained in the following sheets, the judicious reader will find many subjects, which, though they are not particularly discussed by themselves, in separate chapters, yet are essentially *implied*, and frequently *expressed*, in the course of this work. The remark, which is here introduced, might be exemplified, by adverting to the *Divine attributes*; such as Goodness, Holiness, Justice, Truth, Faithfulness, Independence, Immutability, &c. The remark might likewise be illustrated, by referring to what is peculiar to *finite beings*; particularly, in what relates to depravity, and the moral exercises of the mind in its unrenewed state; the doctrines of regeneration, justification, and final perseverance; and also those of the resurrection and the last judgment.

That the reader may form a true and faithful estimate of the nature and design of the *whole work*, which is now presented to view, for his serious inspection, a special regard must be paid to the *connexion* of its several *parts*, and the ultimate *consequences*, in which the *leading principles* finally *result*. In which consequences, both the writer, and his readers of every class, have a most *direct* and IMMEDIATE CONCERN; and the *solemn truth* of which, the *actual experience* of each individual will shortly verify. And, therefore, if the principles, which this volume contains, should not, at the first glance, or in a cursory view, appear to be of an interesting nature, the ingenuous reader will not, from this circumstance, immediately conclude them to be insignificant, unintelligible, nor erroneous; but will suspend his judgment, till he has sincerely endeavoured to find the practical application, of which they admit, and the infinitely important consequences, with which they are attended.

Wallingford (Vermont) April 11, 1816.

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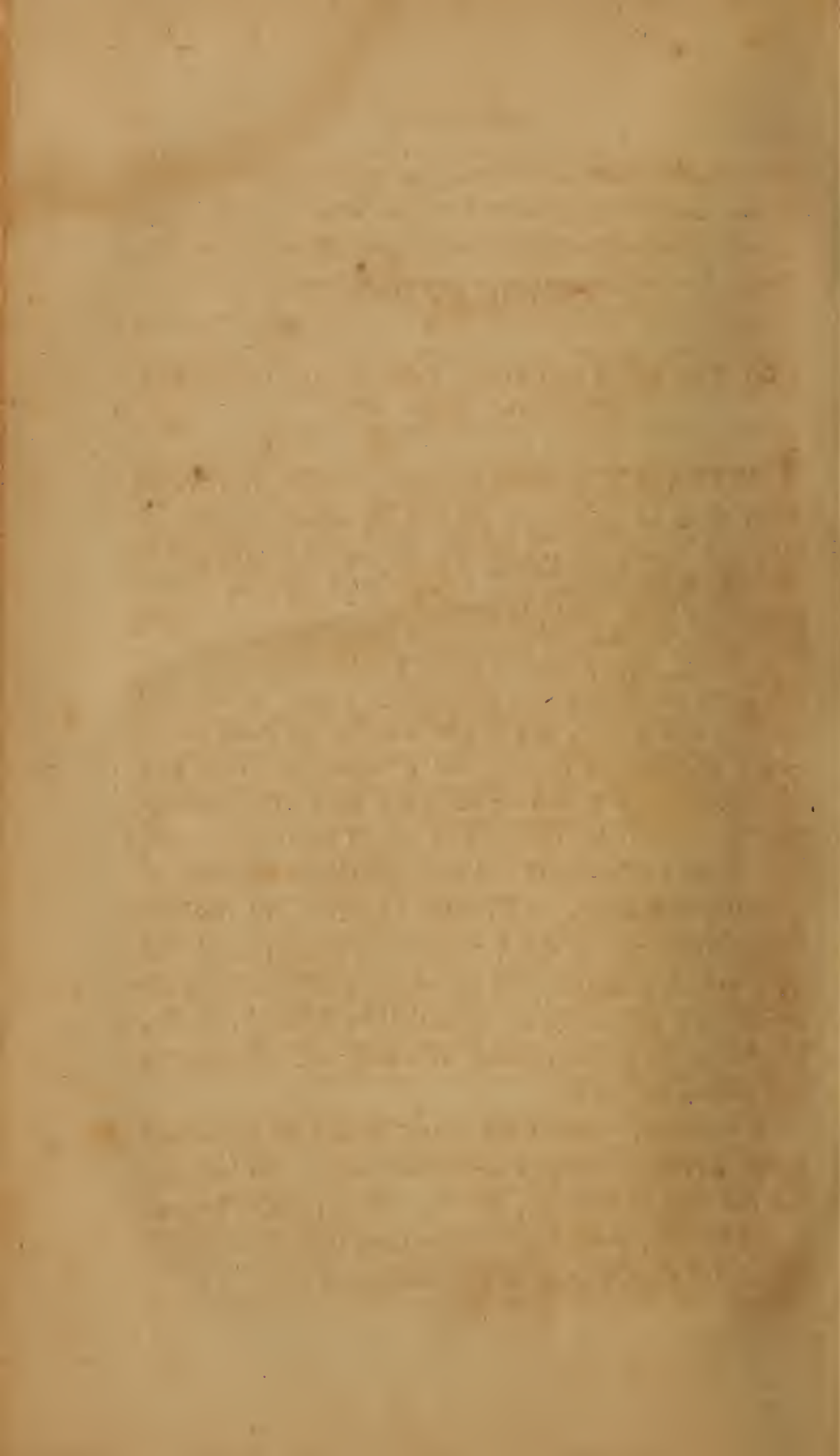
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DEDICATION.

“TO THE KING ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE,
THE ONLY WISE GOD.”

INEFFABLY glorious, and ever adorable JEHOVAH! Wilt thou be graciously pleased, in infinite condescension and mercy, to permit thy servant to DEDICATE to thee the work, which thou hast enabled him to accomplish, and bring to such a result, that he has considered it as being proper to be exhibited to publick view. It has been in the various progressive stages of his past studies, and is now, in a special manner, his most earnest desire and fervent prayer, that it might meet with THY favourable regard, and be attended with THY blessing. For he knows, that utterly vain are all human exertions, even in the exhibition of real truth, without the sacred, all-powerful influences of thy Holy Spirit. All that has been, or ever can be done, unless it is accompanied with THY VITAL ENERGY, will be wholly ineffectual, and will remain as a lifeless picture, or as the dry bones in the valley, before they were clothed with flesh and animated by thy enlivening breath.

A propitious smile from THEE would be accounted by thy servant as being of inestimable value....far surpassing the highest honours, that ever could possibly be conferred by any, even those of the most dignified rank or elevated station, among all the children of men

Whatever opinions may be formed, respecting thy servant, whether those opinions may be expressive of censure or applause, may it always be the object of his greatest concern and constant care to obtain THY approbation; "esteeming it a small thing to be judged by man's judgment; knowing that he, who judgeth him, is the Lord."

Father of mercies, wilt thou graciously grant, that he, who has given so many solemn warnings, and has so often "preached to *others*," may not, *himself*, after all, "be cast away." But from among the numerous millions, who are swiftly rushing on to final ruin, may he be a happy exception. And whatever hope he may entertain of being interested in thy special favour and everlasting love, may he never rest satisfied with any thing less than the assurance of his having actually been the real subject of thy converting grace; since without this assurance he is always liable to be deceived. May he always remember, and realize the important thought, that the charitable opinion of others, or his own favourable views of himself, if not well-founded, will in no degree counter-vail the final loss of his own soul. May he make a seasonable and effectual application to the Almighty Physician for a radical cure of that dreadful disease, which has deeply affected every human mind, and which, from the want of such application, and not from want of goodness in thee, has produced the remediless destruction of thousands, and tens of thousands of Adam's guilty race.

Gracious God, may thy servant join, with a just *speculative knowledge*, a right *practical improvement* of truth. For he has the highest degree of rational conviction, that, without such improvement, even infinite Benevo-

lence itself cannot save him. He professes not to have, respecting justification before immaculate purity, any merit of his own; and no such merit dost thou require. Therefore, he entertains no hope, nor the least flattering prospect, of ever escaping that tremendous state of endless ruin, in which he, and all the rest of mankind are naturally liable to be inextricably involved, but only by flying, before the present transitory scene is closed, to THY boundless mercy, by faith in the glorious Mediator.

Thy servant has the fullest assurance, that thou hast proposed no conditions of salvation, to be fulfilled by those, for whom the conditions are prescribed, but what are absolutely requisite, in order to the actual attainment of that desirable end. Therefore, if, in consequence of his not effectually complying with those conditions, he should finally and forever fall beneath the inconceivable weight of those awful truths, which have deeply engaged his attention for many a serious day, and solitary hour of night, he never can have any reason to utter, against thee, one murmuring word. For thou art possessed of eternal and immutable perfection; and therefore it is not possible, nor can it ever be desirable, that there should be any change in thy blessed nature, or any alteration in the sacred laws, that originate in absolute, unchangeable rectitude.

Thou hast been graciously pleased, most kind, indulgent Parent, to grant thy servant the invaluable privilege of taking a solemn view of thine existence and glorious perfections; and of visiting thee, while thou hast been prosecuting thy plan of operation, by the astonishing exertions of thy power, in the several departments of thy

boundless dominion. And in the amazing prospects, which have been, during this intercourse, presented to his mind, he has every where found thee, infinitely amiable in thy nature; absolutely consistent in thy character; and perfectly holy, just and good, in all thy works and ways. He has seen, and rests fully assured, that THOU art transcendently excellent in thyself; and that THOU hast done all things well.

He has discovered one thing, and but only one, and that is SIN, that vile detestable monster....that most unwelcome guest, which, not introduced by thee, but originating, in direct opposition to THY positive order and express command, in the lawless conduct of finite agents, has interrupted the harmony, and prevented the happiness, that might otherwise have universally prevailed, throughout the whole of the mutable, as well as immutable system. But notwithstanding all the conduct of finite agents, whether right or wrong, thy counsel will forever stand, and thou wilt do all thy pleasure. Whatever, therefore, becomes of perceptive beings, belonging to the mutable system; whether by admitting, through the Mediator, the sacred influence of thy saving power, they are infallibly secured in the enjoyment of thyself, from whom alone all happiness flows; or by resisting thy Holy Spirit, they plunge themselves into a state of endless, irrecoverable misery, where they must always "eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices;" yet that immutable system of absolute perfection, which essentially belongs to THEE, will continue unalterably the same. And thy supreme, independent felicity, in which every benevolent mind will al-

ways rejoice, will remain unimpairable through all the possible changes and revolutions of time and eternity.

Gracious God, and merciful Father, may thy servant, on taking a retrospective view of the many changing scenes, through which he has passed, amidst the conflicting waves of a troubled world, be enabled to return, in a suitable manner, his most humble and grateful acknowledgments for the innumerable favours, which he has received from thy kind, supporting hand. To thee he owes that life, which, in the midst of surrounding difficulties and dangers, has been preserved through a long course of years; and also that measure of health and strength, whereby an opportunity has been afforded him of prosecuting his plan of investigating those truths, which have been, and still are, in his estimation, of the most interesting importance.

He desires to render to thee a thankful tribute of sincere and ardent praise, that thou hast continued to him the use of his rational faculties; and that amidst the various operations of his own mind, and the multiplicity of those ideas, by which he has often been led to take a new and untried direction, and traverse regions hitherto unexplored, thou hast not left him to wander into the dark and dreary wilderness of scepticism and infidelity, where many have stumbled and fallen to rise no more.

It is the earnest request of thy servant, that, by the saving influence of efficacious grace, the temper of his mind, and the tenor of his conduct may be answerable to benefits received. And while he gives his full assent to those solemn truths, of which thou hast enabled him to obtain some degree of speculative knowledge, wilt thou, O Father of lights, from whom proceeds every good and

perfect gift, be pleased to grant, that the *practical exercises* of his *heart* may correspond to the *rational conviction* of his *understanding*. And may the same inestimable favour, which the writer of this volume asks for himself, be also bestowed on his readers of every class. Wilt thou, who hast all hearts in thine hand, prepare them for such a reception of the real truth, as that it may operate with all its force, in the production of a salutary effect. And may the effect, begun in the present world, extend forward through interminable duration, in those blissful mansions, where the light of truth will always shine with unsullied lustre. In which light, wilt thou, who art the infinite Fountain of good, and boundless Source of happiness, graciously grant, for the Redeemer's sake, that both the writer and his readers may forever dwell. And there joining with millions of other happy beings, all unite in continually ascribing to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, all honour, glory, and praise, world without end. Amen.

TRUTH DISPLAYED.

PART FIRST.

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PART FIRST.

ON THE UNIVERSAL SYSTEM OF ORIGINAL EXISTENCE :
COMPREHENDING THE DEITY, WITH HIS GLORIOUS
PERFECTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

ON INFINITE PERFECTION.

THE subject here proposed is of the greatest importance and most urgently demands the serious attention of every intelligent being. It is a subject of such a nature as absolutely forbids all trifling or contentious altercation. For it must make an infinite difference in the universal state of things, whether that, which is now to be considered, is, or is not, an actual reality. This is evident, at first view, from the very nature of the case.

If infinite perfection, therefore, is something, which in reality, has an actual existence ; then, awful beyond all description, and dreadful beyond all conception, must be the final consequence of advocating, and obstinately striving to maintain the wrong side of the question. And even to treat the subject with cold indifference will be ultimately found, by all who may presume to make the rash experiment, to be infinitely far from being a harmless thing.

There are two inquiries, which present themselves, and demand an answer.

First: *What is* infinite perfection, considered in the most general view, that can be taken of the subject?

Secondly: Is infinite perfection any thing that really has an actual existence?

To the first inquiry must be given the following universal answer: Infinite perfection is that, whatever it may be, which is different from the want of every thing.

And by the *want* of any thing is meant the actual *non-existence* of the thing that is wanting; for the *want*, and *nonexistence*, of any thing, are perfectly synonymous terms.

And now, reader, it is left with you to give a particular and direct answer to the *second* inquiry, which is,

Whether infinite perfection is any thing that actually exists? And if, while you are preparing to give an answer, you pay a proper attention to what has been observed, the writer will previously engage to acquiesce in your decision of the question, whenever you have decided it to the satisfaction of your own mind.

You may, however, be assured, that if you should, for argument's sake; for the sake of examining the question on all sides; or for any other reason whatever; be disposed to give a negative answer by saying, That infinite perfection is *nothing* that *actually* exists; you will find yourself, by such an answer, involved in an absolute contradiction; from which you will find no possible way to extricate yourself, but only by rejecting the negative, and admitting the affirmative side of the question. Make the experiment; and let your own experience teach you the result.

Infinite perfection, considered in the most general view, has been defined, as being that, which is different from the *want*, that is, different from the *nonexistence*, of every thing.

To say, therefore, that infinite perfection is nothing that actually exists, is the same as to say, that there is nothing but the *want* of *every thing*; which is the same as to say, There is nothing but the actual nonexistence of every thing: that is, there is no such thing as any actual existence whatever. Consequently;

There is no such thing as the actual existence of a sun, consisting of a vast globe of fire; dispensing its light and heat, and communicating its vivifying influences, to a magnificent system of planets, revolving in regular order around it, as their common centre.... There is no such thing as a planetary system, composed of huge masses of matter, in continual and rapid motion, and shining with a reflected light.... There are no such things as fixed stars, at an inconceivable distance from each other, and from us.... There is no such thing as a particular terraqueous globe, encompassed with an atmosphere, consisting of a fine elastic fluid; and allotted for the habitation of men and other animals of an inferior order.... There is no such thing as clouds that float, nor birds that fly, in the air.... There is no such thing as fish that cut the liquid wave; nor ships that sail on the surface of the mighty deep.... There is no sea nor land.... no grass nor grain.... no herbs, flowers, plants, nor trees.... no cities nor houses.... no animals that graze the field; nor rational beings that inhabit the earth.... There is no such thing as mind nor matter.... no language nor ideas.... no creature, nor Creator.... no truth, nor falsehood.... no

existence of any kind, and no *possibility* of any....and therefore no certainty nor doubt....no propositions, nor suppositions of any kind whatever; and consequently, no such thing as the supposition, That infinite perfection is nothing that actually exists.

Thus you see what is the unavoidable result of taking the negative side of the all-important question; Whether infinite perfection actually exists?

In order, therefore, to obtain satisfaction, relative to this infinitely momentous and solemn subject, you must take the affirmative side; and on that side you will find evidence arising from the very nature of the case, attended with irresistible conviction, that the affirmative is the right side.

You may, if you are so disposed, shut your eyes, in the midst of a clear day, and deny that there is any such thing as light, because you see no evidence of it; it does not follow, however, that light does not exist, because you do not see it. That same evidence, which, by shutting your eyes, you can resist, will, by your opening them, be too strong to be resisted. Infinite perfection shines with a lustre, far brighter than the united splendour of ten thousand suns; and there is no possible way to avoid the evidence of it, but only by shutting the eyes. Let the eyes be open; and the evidence immediately becomes irresistible. "The invisible things of him," to whom infinite perfection belongs, "are clearly seen; being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Utterly inexcusable, therefore, are all those, who remain in a state of darkness; and we shall find none of this character, but

only such as hate the light, and will not come to it, because their deeds are evil.

From this view of the subject, it is evident that every thing depends on infinite perfection. For to suppose *that* to be removed is the same as to suppose every thing to be removed, and nothing left but universal nonexistence; that is, the nonexistence of every thing without any exception. But the supposition of there being nothing but the *want* of every thing; that is, *nothing but universal nonexistence*, is replete with the grossest absurdity and the most horrid impiety; let it therefore be absolutely rejected and immediately dismissed to its native region of eternal darkness.

Having rejected the negative supposition, relative to the actual existence of infinite perfection, we must, as the necessary consequence, admit the affirmative. And on this supposition there is an object inconceivably grand and sublime to rouse and fix the attention, and to excite the most vigorous and delightful exercises of the contemplative mind; an object of infinite value; and containing a boundless treasure of happiness; a treasure, which never can be, in any measure, exhausted, by any deductions of the greatest degree, and of the longest duration; a treasure, containing mines (to use a figurative expression) inconceivably more rich than those of silver or gold. Or, in the language of the poet:

“Unfathomable mines:

“Mines, that support archangels in their state.”

If it should be inquired: What it is, in which infinite perfection is actually contained? The answer is; That it is contained in itself; or, which is the same; it is

contained in *immensity* ; and immensity is contained in infinite perfection. They mutually imply, and are implied in each other ; and are, indeed, both one and the same, without any distinction. Immensity is an object of boundless magnitude ; consisting of an infinite number of immutable parts, all combined in a state of inseparable union, and constituting one universal, immutable, and eternal whole ; which never was created, and never can be annihilated ; but from eternity to eternity, forever remains unchangeably the same. It is absolutely impossible, that any finite mind should ever form an adequate conception of immensity in the full extent of its infinite magnitude ; for this is an object, which an infinite mind alone can comprehend. We can, however, ascertain beyond the possibility of doubt, the reality of its actual existence.

A created being may have, in one respect, as distinct and perfect a perception of an infinite object, as he can of any finite object whatever ; viz. in respect to the truth and reality of its actual existence, and some of its essential properties. But in respect to the greatness or magnitude of infinity, consisting in the difference between that and nothing, the most enlarged conception of any finite mind must always fall infinitely short of the object. For it is to be carefully observed, and ought always to be kept in view ; That there is an essential distinction between the simple truth of a proposition, relating to an infinite object, and the actual magnitude of the object itself. There are objects of various magnitudes, and there is always a truth or reality relating to them all, and each one of them respectively ; but the TRUTH does not vary in its magnitude, as the objects do, to

which the truth relates. Hence it is, that though we cannot form any adequate conception of an infinite object, in respect to its magnitude, (the magnitude of an infinite object being too great for the comprehension of any finite mind, even of the most enlarged capacity) yet in respect to its truth or reality, we can have as clear and as perfect a perception, as we can of any finite object.

It may also be observed; That our conceptions are limited, not only in respect to the magnitude, but also, in respect to the number and variety of objects. Hence there is an infinite difference between human and divine conception; for divine conception always does absolutely and perfectly correspond, not only to the truth and reality of all possible objects; but also to their magnitude, number, and variety, in all its boundless extent.

After having made one observation more, we shall leave for the present, this part of the subject, the particular discussion of which more properly belongs to another place, and return to the consideration of immensity, from which we have been led to make a short digression. The observation is this:

That all the individuals of that class of finite intelligent beings, to whose most desirable lot, through infinite goodness, it shall actually fall to have the adorable Deity for their final portion, as the object of their delightful contemplation, and complete enjoyment, will be continually making a series of progressive advances, in having more and more enlarged conceptions of things respecting their truth, magnitude, number and variety, through all the various stages of happifying changes, that even a whole eternity itself can ever produce.

We shall now resume the consideration of immensity ; the evidence of the reality of which, forces itself on the mind with irresistible conviction ; for the incomprehensible magnitude of the object does not, in the least degree, invalidate the certainty of its actual existence.

Immensity itself, abstract from the consideration of every mutable finite existence, which actually is, or ever can be contained in any part of it, is an immutable, infinite, and eternal system of absolute perfection. Such, therefore, is the essential nature of the whole and every part, as to render it absolutely incapable of admitting any alteration or improvement. Consequently, it is absolutely impossible, that any particular mutable existence should, even by an endless series of improvements, ever be made more perfect than that part of immensity, in which the mutable existence, in its improvable state is, or will be contained. The reason is, because that part of immensity, wherever it is, which does, or will, contain the mutable existence, is absolutely incapable of any improvement ; being already, in its own nature, as perfect as possible ; and is, therefore, the fixed standard of that perfection towards which the mutable existence, the more it is improved, is continually advancing. Hence it follows, that immensity itself, independent of every thing of a changeable nature, that does now exist, or ever can, in any future period, be brought into existence, is in its own nature absolutely and infinitely perfect. And therefore it is impossible that any system, consisting of things of a changeable nature, should, by any improvement of the greatest degree and longest duration, ever rise so high as to reach that degree of perfection, which immensity does, in itself, already contain.

In contemplating that perfection, even infinite perfection, which immensity does, in the very nature of it, necessarily imply, we must extend our views beyond all those mutable things, in any part of the material universe, which present themselves as objects of our senses....beyond the utmost bounds of the habitable globe, on which we dwell....beyond the sun, that amazing source of light, that makes the day....beyond all those vastly distant stars, which decorate the evening sky. There is, indeed, something great and wonderful in these things; but that perfection, which immensity contains, is greater and more wonderful still. We must, therefore, direct our views to the intellectual world, and attempt to form a conception of a system, more fair, more beautiful, and more sublime, than that which is, or any one that ever can be, the object of sensation. Here imagination may exert all its power, without a possibility of ever exceeding the bounds of truth and reality; here the contemplative mind may be furnished with endless employment for all its rational faculties. Eternity itself is not too long to be spent in exploring the boundless riches of immensity.

That the present material system is imperfect is certain for this plain reason; because it is mutable and capable of receiving new improvements. But if it should be improved, to the highest possible degree, so as to have all that perfection of which it is capable of being the subject, it would not, even then, be any more perfect than that part of immensity now actually is, in which the improved system would be contained. For every part of immensity, into which any created existence has been, or ever can be introduced, is now actually as perfect as the

created existence, after all its possible improvements, ever can be. Immensity, therefore, now actually contains all possible perfection. For every part of immensity, independent of all created existence, actually is, even now, considered in itself, according to the degree of it, absolutely perfect; the whole sum, therefore, of all the parts existing together in a state of inseparable union, necessarily constitutes one universal, independent, immutable and eternal system of infinite absolute perfection. And consequently such is the nature of this inexpressibly grand, this inconceivably sublime system, as to render it utterly incapable of ever receiving any alteration or higher degree of perfection, by the introduction, and endless improvement, of ten thousand times ten thousand worlds of created existence. For, according to what has been observed, all the perfection, that ever can possibly belong to such a number of worlds, and countless millions more, does now actually belong to immensity itself, independent of them all. That is, the greatest possible perfection, that ever can flow, even from a whole eternity, relative to any mutable system, is now already actually contained in that one present, universal, immutable system of infinite absolute perfection, which constitutes immensity. Here, then, is an object worthy of the delightful contemplation even of an Infinite Mind; and therefore an object supremely worthy of the most vigorous and unintermitted attention of all percipient beings, who belong to the mutable system, and still retain a capacity of endless improvement in knowledge and happiness. Though it is an object too great for the comprehension of any finite intellect; yet it is an object of which a conception may be formed, expanding wide, and wider

still, in endless progression. Here reason and imagination, uniting their whole strength, may always operate in concert to form a conception of a system, the most grand, the most beautiful, the most excellent and the most sublime, without a possibility of ever surpassing the bounds of actual truth and present reality. Here is an object, even an actual, present object, in the view of which the rational soul may travel on, and all along, as it pursues the pleasant path, will see new wonders of increasing magnitude, to excite its rapturous admiration, continually rising, one after another, in the most agreeable succession. And after having thus travelled, for millions of ages, will find its delightful journey but just begun.

Since there is, in reality, such an object as has been described; and even an object, which, in respect to its magnitude, infinitely exceeds the power of all description, it follows, that there is something, intirely distinct from any thing that can be found in any part of the material universe, which, being always actually present, continually claims our most solemn attention; viz. that mysterious, stupendous existence, which in its own essential, underived nature, universally implies absolute perfection; and which, therefore, if every part of creation was annihilated, would still remain the same. This is that, with which we are at all times, and every where encompassed; that in which “we live, move, and have our being;” and that which, on every side, “around, above, below,” extends to infinity.

It may, therefore, justly excite the greatest astonishment, in every serious, reflecting mind, to think what vast numbers of the human race, who call themselves

rational beings, should have been through the whole of life, even to the present hour, so busily engaged in the eager pursuit of those shadowy forms of happiness, which make, alternately, a momentary appearance, and then vanish away, as never to have once, like Moses, "turned aside to see this great sight."

CHAPTER II.

ON THE DIVINE MIND:

INFINITE absolute perfection necessarily has, in the very nature of it, an immutable and eternal AGREEMENT with itself. This absolute, independent, immutable and eternal AGREEMENT, consisting in perfect, simple, indivisible UNITY, or 1, is what we call, the DIVINE MIND; that is, the DEITY himself.

The Deity is that universal, immutable, and eternal percipient principle, who always has infinite absolute perfection for the direct, immediate, and intuitive object of his perception. He, and he alone, perceives, at one all-comprehensive view, that amazing object, on the nature and magnitude of which we have made some observations.

The Deity has an immediate relation to, that is, an immediate connection with, the whole and every part of immensity; and therefore is Omnipresent. He has an agreement with all possibility, that is all power; and therefore is Omnipotent. He comprehends at one view

the whole of immensity and eternity ; and therefore is Omniscient. He always has absolute, infinite, immutable, and eternal perfection for the immediate object of his perception ; and therefore is absolutely, infinitely, immutably, and eternally Holy, Just, and Good.

There is ONE, and but only ONE, absolute AGREEMENT of infinite perfection with itself ; there is, therefore, One, and but only One, living and true God. The agreement of infinite perfection with itself is perfectly *simple*, that is, uncompounded ; therefore the Deity is one perfectly pure, simple, that is, uncompounded Being ; not consisting of different parts of various magnitudes. He does, as we have already observed, comprehend at one view, the whole of eternity as well as immensity ; and therefore it is impossible, that by the taking place of any event, in any particular period of futurity, his knowledge should be increased ; or that any new improvement should ever be made in that infinite absolute perfection, which is, even now, necessarily implied in immensity. Consequently, none of those successive changes, in the mutable system of things, which variously affect the minds of finite beings, can ever make any alteration in the Omniscient Mind. “ He is of one mind, and who can turn him ? ”

When we would express the universal nature and essential properties of the Divine Mind, consisting in the agreement of absolute infinite perfection with itself, all language, in common use, intirely fails : we shall be under a necessity, therefore, of adopting, in some instances, a new phraseology. In order to express one essential, universal property, of that one immutable and eternal agreement of infinite absolute perfection with itself, in

which the Divine Mind consists, we shall call it, **THE ABSOLUTE PRESENT** ; or, **THE ABSOLUTE IS**.

The absolute Present eternally remains immutably the same. It always was the same as it is now ; it is now the same as it always was and it always will be the same as it is. It never was future, and never will be past. It is essential to the very nature of it to be always, and every where **PRESENT**. The mode of expression, therefore, to be used in speaking of it, must be absolute, by saying, That it **IS**, and, That **IT IS WHAT IT IS**. The proper name of it, therefore, and that which is peculiarly expressive of its essential nature, when used in the first person, must be....**I AM** ; or, **I AM WHAT I AM**. And this is the true import of the term, **JEHOVAH** ; which signifies, the Being who **IS** ; or, the Being who was, who is, and who will be ; that is, the one infinite, immutable, and **ETERNAL BEING**, whose essential nature it is **TO BE** ; that is, to be present, at all times, and in all places ; who is “ the Father of lights from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift ; and with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning.”

“ And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say unto me, What is his name ? what shall I say unto them ? And God said unto Moses : **I AM WHAT I AM** : and he said : thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel : **I AM** hath sent me unto you.” (Exod. iii. 13, 14.)

On the agreement of infinite absolute perfection with itself ; that is, on the Divine Mind ; or, on the absolute **PRESENT**, every thing that actually exists in the

whole universal system, intirely depends. And not only all actual, but also all possible existence, intirely depends on the absolute *Present*. For with respect to whatever can exist, through a whole eternity, the possibility of it does even now actually belong to the absolute *Present*. On the absolute *Present*, therefore, all things, both actual and possible, intirely depend.

Take away the absolute *Present*....the absolute is, that all-connecting, all-sustaining principle, and what will remain? Absolute, universal nothing. If there is no absolute *Present*....no is ; then there is no truth....no reality....no existence....no immensity....no eternity. But there is an absolute *Present* ; the unalterable nature of which is TO BE....to be something that is present....something that is present in this place ; and something that is present in all other places, throughout immensity....something that is present, at this time ; and something, that will be present, in every succeeding time, throughout eternity....something which, though it is absolutely one and indivisible, being perfect unity, and therefore, not consisting of different degrees of magnitude, yet is infinitely great, considered as sustaining an infinity of relations. For it relates to all possibility or power....to every part, and the whole of immensity....to every part and the whole of eternity....to all truth ; all reality ; and all existence.

And now, let all the rational faculties of the soul, united with all the powers of imagination, be called forth into the most vigorous exercise ; and let us try our utmost strength and skill to see if we can find a place, in any part of the boundless universe ; or look forward to any period, in endless futurity, in which we can be free from any dependence on, or connexion with, the abso-

lute Present...the infinite I AM ; which is always, and every where present....present in heaven, earth and hell.

“ O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising : Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and hast laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me : it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me : even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee ; but the light shineth as the day : the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.” (Psalm cxxxix. 1—12.)

“ Lord, thou hast search'd and seen me through ;

“ Thine eye commands with piercing view

“ My rising and my resting hours,

“ My heart and flesh with all their powers.

“ My thoughts, before they are my own,

“ Are to my God distinctly known :

“ He knows the words I mean to speak

“ E'er from my opening lips they break,

“ Within thy circling power I stand ;

“ On every side I find thy hand :

“ Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,

“ I am surrounded still with God,

"Amazing knowledge, vast and great !

"What large extent, what lofty height !

"My soul, with all the powers I boast,

"Is in the boundless prospect lost.

"O may these thoughts possess my breast,

"Where'er I rove, where'er I rest !

"Nor let my weaker passions dare

"Consent to sin....for God is there." WATTS.

The absolute PRESENT....the great I AM ; that is, the agreement of infinite absolute perfection with itself ; that is, the Deity ; that Omniscient, Omnipotent Mind, who, having infinite absolute perfection, as the object of his perception, is absolutely pure, simple, indivisible, immutable and eternal ; is the supreme Governor of all worlds ; by him they were created ; on him they intirely depend ; and to him they all absolutely belong : for with him all actual and possible existence is connected. Consequently, *we* have a connexion with him ; a connexion which is indissoluble, and therefore of endless duration. Our indissoluble connexion with the Deity, (as will, in its proper place, be shown) results from the nature of that immaterial principle of perception, which *we* possess. How interesting, then, is our situation....how awfully solemn ! We have commenced an existence, which must inevitably continue forever ! We are not, however, always to remain here ; but must enter into a new state of existence ; the difference between which, and that in which we now are, is great beyond all conception. And into this new state we must very soon be introduced ; even as soon as death shall cut the thread....the slender thread, that now ties us to this transitory scene of things.

Since there is absolute perfection ; and since there is a universal percipient principle....an Infinite Mind....a

God ; who can, and who must, from the necessity of his own nature, have a complete conception of the amazing whole ; certainly we, who have an indissoluble connexion with him, and a most strict accountability to him, are called upon, in a voice louder than thunder, to make it the object of our constant care and ultimate concern to have all our thoughts and all our practice regulated in conformity to these solemn realities.

We have no occasion to rove abroad in search of evidence for the existence of the Deity. For we have the evidence within ourselves, and all around us, on every side ; evidence which, with our eyes open, we must unavoidably see. As a person in the open air, in the midst of a clear day, must, with his eyes open, unavoidably see the light. It is true, as we have already observed, a person may shut his eyes, and in this situation, not seeing the light, may deny its existence. But all that he can gain, in such a case, will be only the exposure of his own perverseness and folly.

Be it remembered ; That it is “ the *fool*, who hath said in his heart, “ There is no God.”

Let there be a true explanation of what is to be understood by the Divine Mind ; that is, that universal percipient principle, which, at one all-comprehensive view perceives the whole of infinite absolute perfection, and the evidence of its reality will become irresistible. Such an explanation may be considered (to speak in figurative language) as the opening of the eyes to that light, which, whether the eyes are open or shut, continually shines with equal splendour.

The absolute Present is that on which the universal system intirely depends ; and therefore is that without

which the whole is at once dissolved, that is, reduced to nothing; and consequently we ourselves do not exist. But we certainly know, that we do exist. And if any should be so inconsistent as to say, That he doubts his own existence; he must be reminded, that, in the present case, even *doubt* implies absolute *certainly*. For non-existence cannot doubt. The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable. There is an absolute Present....an absolute is; or, in other terms: There is a God. Because a description of the absolute Present is the very same as a description of all the essential properties of Deity. For by the absolute Present is meant that one individual, identical Being or Essence, which has been from eternity, is now, and always will be, every where present; and which, in its own nature, is perfectly pure, simple, indivisible, and immutable; which no corporeal eye has ever seen, nor ever can see. It is that, whose essential property it is....TO BE; and to be forever WHAT IT IS; or, as we have already observed; it must, in the use of the first person, be called....I AM. From what has been said in the description of the absolute Present, it is evident, that it is *that*, which pervades immensity and inhabits eternity; and therefore is the same as that Omniscient, all-comprehending Mind, which has infinite absolute perfection for the object of its perception.

The absolute Present is something which, on account of the infinite number of relations it sustains, is infinitely great; for it is every where present; that is, it has an immediate relation to the whole, and to every part of immensity. In this view of it, therefore, it is infinitely beyond the comprehension of any finite mind. And this will always be the case; even though the finite mind

should forever continue to be enlarged by the most rapid series of progressive improvements.

The absolute Present, as we have before repeatedly observed, is the same as the agreement of immensity ; that is, the same as the agreement of absolute perfection, with itself ; it is, therefore, immutable and eternal. And it is infinitely great ; not as consisting of different degrees of magnitude ; but as having a connexion with, and being the very basis or foundation of, all actual, and all possible existence. It is, as we have said, the percipient principle of infinite perfection ; that is, it is that, which immediately perceives, and completely comprehends, the whole of immensity....the whole of infinite absolute perfection ; and is the same as what we call
THE DEITY.

The absolute Present....the infinite I AM, is something that always *was*. For to say, that there ever was a time when it was not, implies a direct contradiction. If you imagine that it can be consistently supposed, that there ever was a time, when there was no Present ; then, for your own conviction make the attempt to form a supposition of this kind. To say, There was a time, when there was no present, is the same as to say, There never was such a time ; that is, it is the same as to say, Such a time never was present. To say, That any thing *was*, or *has been*, whether we speak of time, or any thing else whatever, is the same as to say, That it *was*, or *has been* PRESENT. Again ; to say, That any thing actually *is*, or *will be*, is the same as to say, That it *is*, or *will be* PRESENT. Therefore, we never can suppose, that there ever was, is now, or ever will be, any thing whatever, without supposing, that there is an ABSOLUTE PRES-

ENT. Hence it is evident, that we never can make one single affirmation, respecting any thing whatever, without bringing into view an ABSOLUTE PRESENT of which we must always say, That IT IS; or when expressed in the first person, the name, significant of the essential nature of this absolute Present, will be I AM.

From the preceding representation it must appear to all, who, divesting their minds of prejudice, examine the subject with impartial attention, irresistibly evident, that there is an Omnipresent Deity....an infinite, universal Mind, who, at one immediate, intuitive view, completely comprehends the whole system of things, both actual and possible, in all their infinite variety of connexions, relations, and dependencies. Therefore to say, or even attempt to imagine, 'That there is no God, is the greatest degree of impiety, madness, and folly.

Man, in regard to his mind, as we are informed by the sacred writers, was made in the image of God; because the human mind, in resemblance of the Deity, is, in its essence, simple, indivisible, immaterial, and immortal. These are some of the properties, which may be considered as constituting the natural image of God. But though, in regard to his natural image, (as in metaphorical language it is called) there are some respects, in which there is a resemblance between the Divine, and the human mind; yet there are others, in which there is an infinite dissimilarity. We shall, in this place, only just mention a few things, by which every created mind, and the human mind in particular, is perfectly distinguished from the Deity.

1. There was a time when the human mind (and the same is to be observed respecting every created mind)

had no actual existence. But the Deity coexisted with eternity.

He, being the infinite I AM, the one absolute Present, which now *is*, and always *was*, existed before time begun that succession, which, having already commenced, is now to continue forever; there never was a time, therefore, when he did not exist. It cannot be said, that he has existed only in one time, or any finite number of times; for he has existed through a whole eternity.

2. The human mind, with all its possible improvements, can have only a limited conception of objects, in respect to their magnitude, number, and variety. But the Deity always has an absolutely perfect view of a universal system of boundless magnitude, with all the objects, infinite in number, and endless in variety, which it contains.

3. The human mind has no positive perceptions, but only what are continually varying by a constant succession. Each one, that flows from the future, has a momentary existence in the present, and then forever retires to the past. The human mind also frequently has perception of the negative kind; which being directly opposite to positive perception, constitutes what is called, *pain*, or *misery*; and which is the consequence of previous positive perception, having falsehood for its object. But the Deity's perceptions are all immutably permanent; without any succession or variation. They never were future, and never will be past; but they are all present, and will eternally continue to be the same as they are. And since the Deity always has an unerring view of all objects according to the most exact truth and

reality of things ; it being absolutely inconsistent with his nature to have any correspondence with falsehood ; therefore all his perceptions are positive, and he never can possibly have any of the negative kind. Therefore he is, in his own blessed nature, absolutely incapable of pain or misery.

4. The human mind can have no positive perception, but only through the intervention, or by the instrumentality of some medium. Hence a system of organized matter is an essential prerequisite in order to furnish the finite mind with positive perception. But the Deity has a most direct and immediate view of all the objects of his perception, without the intervention of any medium whatever. Therefore his perceptions have no dependence on matter nor motion, nor on any created existence whatever. And it is never the case (as it is with regard to the perceptions that belong to a finite mind) that his perceptions ever vary according to the various successive changes that are continually taking place in the system of mutable existence.

We perceive things according to their *appearance* ; and since they may, in some cases, *appear* to us different from what they are in *reality*, we are liable to be deceived. But the Deity, since he views all the objects of his perception *intuitively*, just as they are in themselves, is beyond all possibility of deception.

And even all finite beings of that class, who will eventually be admitted to a confirmed state of perfect happiness ; though they will still have a view of all the objects of their perception according to the appearance they make ; yet by the very nature of their state, being placed infinitely beyond the reach of all false appearance,

will be absolutely incapable of ever being deceived. They will, therefore, have no false perception ; and consequently, they never will have any perception of the negative kind, or that in which pain or misery consists. For with respect to all those of this description, will be completely fulfilled what is written : “ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes : and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” (Rev. xxi. 4.)

CHAPTER III.

ON THE DIVINE PERCEPTION.

IN the universal system, in which the Deity is the soul or living principle, who sustains the whole, and on whom the whole depends, there are four things, each of which requires a distinct consideration.

First: **THE OBJECT** of Divine Perception ; which, as we have already observed, (chap. 1) is absolute perfection ; or immensity, with all its parts, infinite in number and variety. Amazing object !....An object too great ever to be comprehended by any finite mind. It is an object, which, in respect to its boundless magnitude, none but an infinite mind can conceive.

Secondly : The universal percipient principle ; that is, the Divine Mind, or the Deity ; who is infinitely great ; and whose greatness results, not from different degrees of magnitude, increasing to infinity, (for the Divine Mind

is absolute unity, or 1) but from the infinite number of relations he sustains. For he, though one pure, simple, indivisible Essence, yet has a relation to the whole, and every part of immensity. He is, therefore, incomprehensible by all but himself.

Thirdly : The Divine Perception itself ; or that relative perfection, which has a complete correspondence to, that is, a perfect agreement with, absolute perfection.

Fourthly : The eternal agreement of *Relative*, with *Absolute* Perfection : Or, in other terms, expressive of the same idea ; the eternal agreement of Divine Perception with its object.

Having already taken a general view of the universal object of Divine Perception, consisting in absolute perfection ; and also the universal percipient principle, which is the Divine Mind ; we shall now proceed to take a general view of the Divine Perception itself.

Absolute infinite perfection, in its agreement with itself, necessarily requires a perfect correspondent ; that is, it requires something to perfectly correspond to, that is, perfectly agree with, absolute infinite perfection. This perfect correspondent is what we call, Relative Perfection ; because it has an eternal relation to, that is, an eternal agreement with, Absolute Perfection. And this Relative Perfection is the same as the Divine Perception itself. It is the universal nature of all true perception to be *relative*. It relates to something ; it agrees with some real object. A true perception is the perception of something. Hence the Divine Perception, being in its own nature, completely perfect, because it completely corresponds to a perfect object, is the perfection of perfection.

And if it should be enquired ; What is the necessity of there being *relative* perfection to correspond to *absolute* perfection ? the answer is, The agreement of absolute perfection with itself ; that is, the Divine Mind, constitutes this necessity. But perhaps the querist, not yet satisfied, would wish to enquire once more ; What is the cause of this necessity ? The universal answer to this inquiry is ; This necessity, being in its own nature, the one, original, absolute, immutable, and eternal necessity, necessarily is what it is ; because there was, in the original state of things, NO POSSIBILITY of its not being what it is. If you say, That NO POSSIBILITY of its not being what it is, is NO CAUSE of its being what it is ; then, in thus saying, you give a final answer to the enquiry. For this one, original, absolute, immutable, and eternal necessity, consisting in the agreement of absolute perfection with itself, and which is the same as the Divine Mind, is not an effect of any cause whatever ; for it is in itself, in its own original nature, the very first cause of all effects.

Wonderful, mysterious, adorable Necessity !

“ How shall I name Thee ?...How my labouring soul

“ Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth !

“ Great system of perfections ! Mighty Cause

“ Of causes mighty ! Cause uncaused ; sole root

“ Of nature, that luxuriant growth of God. -

“ First Father of effects ! that progeny

“ Of endless series : where the golden chain’s

“ Last link admits a period, Who can tell ?” YOUNG.

We shall now return to the consideration of Divine Perception ; respecting which may be observed the following things.

1. This Divine Perception of which we are now to take a general view, necessarily and essentially belongs to the Deity, and to him alone.

In the Divine Mind, that is, the Deity, consists, as we have already observed, the original, absolute necessity of there being relative perfection; for the Deity being in his own nature, a universal percipient principle, necessarily requires universal perception; that is, relative perfection, completely, and eternally corresponding to absolute perfection. Therefore, relative perfection, or in other words, divine perception, necessarily and essentially belongs to the Divine Mind, that is, the Deity; it belongs to him alone, and can never belong to any other being whatever.

For as there can, in the nature of things, be but only **ONE** universal percipient principle; so there can be but only **ONE** universal perception; and this, as we have said, peculiarly belongs to the universal Mind.

2. Relative Perfection; or which is the same thing (as the term is here used) Divine Perception, is perfectly pure, holy, just, and true. For it is essential to the nature of Divine Perception to directly and completely correspond to all things, as they really are in themselves, without any intervening appearance, and therefore it never can have any agreement with falsehood. For there never can be any perception corresponding to falsehood, without a false appearance. But Divine Perception universally has all things as they really are in themselves, for its direct and immediate object.

Hence it is, in a most strict and literal sense, "impossible for God to lie." (Heb. vi. 18.) For the Deity to have any false perception is as impossible, even with a

natural impossibility, as it is for him to change from an absolutely perfect, to an imperfect being; and this is as impossible as it is for him to cease to be. But does not the Deity have a perception of something in regard to falsehood? He most certainly does. For he always has a perfect perception of universal truth. And since it is really true, that SIN, consisting in transgression of the divine law, is the cause, and the only cause, of the introduction of falsehood into the mutable system; the Deity therefore, has the most extensive and unerring view of the real nature of sin, as being that without which no falsehood, and consequently no misery, could ever have been introduced into actual existence. He has a most exact view of the whole nature of sin, according to what it really is; and therefore he has a complete perception of it as being the most odious and abominable, the most vile and detestable of all things, that ever can be introduced into the system of mutable existence, to which finite beings belong; for into the immutable system of Infinite Perfection, which peculiarly belongs to himself, sin never can possibly be admitted.

Since the Deity always has a perfect perception of all things, according to the most exact truth and reality, therefore he views sin, which is the only cause of falsehood, as being the original source of all the mischief and misery, that ever did, or ever can exist; and consequently, in having this view of things, he never has any false, but on the contrary, always has perfectly true perception. Hence it follows:

3. That the Divine Perception is all *positive*; without any mixture, even in the least degree, of that which is of the *negative* kind.

Though it is not originally necessary, in the nature of things, yet is a matter of fact, that, to finite beings, at least to some among them, belong two kinds of perception, directly opposite to each other; viz. positive and negative; the last of which is known by the name of PAIN; which is a consequence, resulting from falsehood, as its productive cause. For a proof of the real existence of this kind of perception, with relation to the finite mind, nothing more is necessary, but only to refer to actual experience; by which it is confirmed in ten thousand times ten thousand melancholy instances.

But to the universal mind belongs no perception, but only that which is positive: it being strictly impossible, and implying an absolute contradiction, that there ever should be any of the opposite kind, or that in which pain or misery consists. For pain universally presupposes false perception; from which the Deity is, and eternally must be, absolutely free.

Hence it follows; that since all the Divine Perception is positive and perfectly pure; therefore the Deity, having a universal, immutable system of infinite perfection, which is peculiarly his own, enjoys, to the utmost extent of all possibility, absolute, independent, immutable and eternal felicity. Therefore all the expressions of infinite benevolence and kind regard, which he has manifested towards those who belong to the system of mutable existence, are of the most free and disinterested nature.

4. The divine perception is immutable and eternal.

It admits of no variation nor succession. It never can be diminished nor augmented. It being already absolutely and infinitely perfect, never can possibly admit of

any new improvements. What it was originally, previous to all succession of time, it is now : and what it is now, it will, while time continues to flow, in endless succession through a whole eternity, forever remain.

5. The Divine Perception is infinitely extensive.

It does at all times, perfectly correspond to the whole and every part of the universal system. It corresponds to all actual and all possible truth ; to the truth of all that ever has been, is, or will be. To finite beings frequently belongs that kind of perception which is called, *doubt* ; which consists in the perception of an imperfect degree of apparent evidence. But in the Divine Perception, which always has a direct and immediate correspondence to truth itself, without the intervention or instrumentality of any particular medium, no such thing as doubt can ever be implied. The Divine Perception perfectly corresponds to the whole system of things, in respect to the infinity of their number, their endless variety, and all their different degrees of magnitude ; from the smallest, through every intermediate gradation, even to immensity itself.

CHAPTER IV.

ON TIME AND ETERNITY.

HAVNIG taken a general view of the universal object of Divine Perception ; which object consists in Absolute Perfection : the universal percipient principle ; consisting in THE AGREEMENT of Absolute Perfection with itself ; which AGREEMENT is the very same as the DIVINE MIND : and Divine Perception, which we have called Relative Perfection, or the Perfection of Perfection ; having taken a view of these three distinct things ; we shall now proceed to a brief consideration of the universal and eternal AGREEMENT of the Divine Perception with its object ; that is ; the universal and eternal agreement of *Relative*, with *Absolute* Perfection.

From the essential nature of the Divine Mind it is necessarily required, that infinite perception should agree with its infinite object. It is necessary, not merely that it should agree *once*, and then agree no more ; but it is absolutely necessary, that it should *always* agree : that is, that it should agree an INFINITE number of times ; or which is the same thing ; that it should have an *infinite number of agreements*. And this infinite number of agreements is that which we denominate ETERNITY. Eternity, therefore, is a universal system of agreements ; each one of which agreements, considered by itself, is what we call *one time*. Since the universal percipient principle ; that is, the Divine Mind, requires an infinite number of agreements....agreements of Divine Perception with its proper object ; therefore, the Divine Mind not

only pervades immensity ; but also (to use the language of scripture) “ inhabits eternity.”

A whole eternity has been actually present ; not in separate parts, each one by itself, succeeding that, which went before ; but a whole eternity has been present, in connexion with itself. The connexion of a whole eternity with itself is now past ; and one individual time, by itself, is now present ; that is, has an immediate relation to the Absolute Present....the infinite I AM. A whole separate eternity is now future ; and remains to be present, every individual part by itself, one after another, in endless succession. The reason of this is, because the Absolute Present, consisting in the agreement of Absolute Perfection with itself, which regulates the whole, and on which the whole depends, always requires that when (according to the explanation already given) one whole eternity is past, one individual time should be present *once* ; and that, after its having been once present, it should be past. For such is the nature of the Absolute Present, that though it always requires, that one time should be present ; yet it never will admit any two individual times, each one by itself, to be both present at once ; or which is the same thing ; it will never admit any one individual time, by itself, to be more than once present ; and therefore it requires, that every individual time, immediately after it has once been present, should be past.

As soon as any one individual time, which is now present, is past, it will then be separated from the future ; and being thus separated, will produce the want of one future time ; which time, as soon as it is wanting in the future, will be present. And immediately after it has

once been present, it will be past ; and as soon as it is past, it will be separated from the future ; and being thus separated, it will produce the want of another future time ; which time, as soon as it is wanting in the future, will be present, &c. as before, through endless duration ; that is, till the period arrives, when, by the continually increasing separation of the past from the future, a whole eternity is intirely exhausted. But the evidence of the utter impossibility that such a period should ever arrive, is too strong to be resisted by the most pertinacious mind.

Since it has been observed, that a whole eternity has been actually present ; some one, perhaps, may be disposed to inquire : When, or in what one preceding, or succeeding time, was eternity present ? We answer ; Eternity never has been present in any preceding, nor in any one succeeding time ; but it has been present in *all times together* ; that is, it has been present in *eternity* ; that is, a whole eternity has been present in connexion with itself. And now perhaps the inquirer would wish to be informed ; How long, or how many times, eternity was present ? The universal and final answer to this inquiry is ; That eternity was present an infinite number of times. It is not however to be supposed, that it was present first in one time, by itself, and then present, in another time, succeeding the first ; and then present in a third time, succeeding the second ; and so on to infinity. According to a true statement of the case, and that alone by which a contradiction can be avoided ; eternity was present in an infinite number of times together, and not in any one time by itself, before or after another. For it implies a contradiction to suppose, that eternity

could ever have been present, in any *one time alone* ; it has, therefore, been present, not in any one time only ; nor in any finite number of times ; but in the whole of eternity itself : Or, in other terms, coinciding with the answer to the first inquiry : A whole eternity has been actually present, in connexion with all its parts ; that is, in connexion with eternity itself.

With regard to time, three things are to be considered ; viz. The Past, the Present, and the Future. The past and the future are separate times ; the future being separate from the present, and the past separate from the future. From the separation of the past from the future necessarily results that one individual time, which has an immediate relation to the Absolute Present ; and on account of its having such a relation, it is, in distinction from the future and the past, called, the *present time*. Every individual time, which is contained in eternity, and now remains to be present, will have three distinct denominations. As long as it remains in its separate state, it will be denominated, *future* ; but when it comes into a state of immediate connexion with the agreement of absolute perfection with itself, which agreement, we have called, The Absolute Present ; then the individual time, which is now future, will be denominated, the *present time*. Immediately after it has once received the denomination of the *present time*, it will then receive another denomination, viz. that of *the past*. And having once received this last denomination, it will forever retain it.

It is astonishing beyond all expression to think how infinitely extensive is every individual time, when it comes into a state of immediate connexion with the Ab-

solute Present : for that individual instant of time, which is NOW present, extends, at once, through a whole immensity. It is perfectly inconsistent to suppose, that one individual instant of time is now present in one place, and not equally present in all other places. It is evident, therefore, that every individual instant of time, as it successively becomes present, that is, becomes immediately connected with the Absolute Present, extends at once, through a whole immensity. It is on account of the infinitely extensive nature of every individual time, that it is impossible that two individual times should both be present at once. Hence it is, that all the times, contained in a future eternity, must become present in succession, one after another ; because each one, when it becomes present, extends through immensity ; therefore, it is impossible that any more than one individual time should be present at once.

The past is forever increasing ; and as it advances from one degree to another, it is, in every progressive gradation, separated from the future : and consequently the present is forever renewed. For as soon as that individual instant, which is now present, is past, then a new time will be present ; and when that is past, then another new time will be present, &c. to infinity. And all this is what the agreement of absolute perfection with itself, that is, the Absolute Present, necessarily requires.

Let us then make a solemn pause.....to indulge our amazement in the view of that wonderful series of operations of infinite extent, which are performed with inconceivable activity, by the Absolute Present....the great I AM....that adorable Being, who is, in the sacred writings, with the strictest propriety, called, “ The Living

God." For he, with ceaseless activity and resistless energy, is engaged in a series of operations, extensive as immensity, and durable as eternity. That series of operations, by which TIME is made to continually flow from the future to the present, and from the present to the past, is continually carried on, with perfect uniformity, in all places; by night and by day, without any intermission. "He that keepeth Israel," says the Psalmist, "shall neither slumber nor sleep."

It is astonishing to think, but yet it is undeniably true, That a whole eternity has actually been present; not in single, separate parts, one succeeding another; but a whole eternity has been present, in connexion with all its parts. A whole eternity, in a state of connexion with all its parts, is now past, to return no more; and consequently, a whole eternity, in a state of separation, is now future; and in that state is forever to remain, as the inexhaustible fountain....the boundless ocean....from which is now flowing, and will forever flow, in one uninterrupted, resistless course, that amazing stream of TIME, on which, in itself independent, all the various changes, any part of created existence is capable of receiving, intirely depend.

And therefore, if all created existence should be annihilated, the succession of time would still continue to be invariably the same. The supposition of universal annihilation, however, now comes too late to ever be admitted: because (as it will, in its proper place, be made to appear) it is, by an unalterable decree, otherwise determined.

And with regard to Time, it must be considered as being something that never was created; for it was ori-

ginally contained in that state of eternity, which is past, and now flows from that which is future ; and therefore it will continue to exist till eternity itself shall expire. But to suppose that there is, within the whole universal system, any possibility of the expiration, that is, the final end, of eternity, is both impious and absurd, in the highest imaginable degree.

It may well excite the most profound amazement, in every contemplative mind, to consider that wonderful agency, extending at once, infinitely wide, deep, and high ; and reaching forward in a line of interminable length by which time is making an endless transition from the eternal future to the eternal past ; and thus is forever renewing its agreement with the Absolute Present ; that inconceivably active, living principle, which performs the whole operation ; and which, at one all-comprehensive view, perceives immensity, with all it contains ; and all that will, through endless futurity, be introduced.

A whole eternity, having already been present, in a state of connexion, is now forever past ; and therefore, a whole eternity in a state of separation, is now, and will forever continue to be, future. “ Futurity for every future”....that boundless source from which proceeds the time, in which we now exist ; and through which we are swiftly advancing to meet the solemn and inexpressibly important result of our final destination.

Interesting beyond all conception is the present period of our existence ; because, from the colour, we give the time we now possess, our future eternity is to receive its whole complexion.

“Eternity ! thou pleasing, dreadful thought !

“Through what variety of untried being,

“Through what new scenes and changes must we pass ?

“The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before us.

“O, that unfathomable sea !

“Those deeps without a shore ;

“Where living waters gently play,

“Or fiery billows roar.

CHAPTER V.

ON PROPOSITIONS, POSSIBILITY, NECESSITY, CONTINGENCE,
AND TRUTH, ACTUAL AND CONDITIONAL.

WE have already taken a general view, 1st, of the universal Object of Divine Perception : 2d, of the universal Percipient Principle ; that is, the Divine Mind : 3d, of the universal, infinite, immutable and eternal Perception, which essentially belongs to the Divine Mind, that is, the Deity : 4th, of the Agreement of the Divine Perception with its infinite Object : an Agreement, which extends at once through a whole immensity, and reaches forward, in one interminable line, through a boundless eternity.

The next thing would be to consider the Divine Power ; but, in order to this, we must previously take a general view of the nature of propositions, truth, possibility, necessity, &c. all which have such an intimate connexion, that they must be considered together, and cannot well be separately examined.

A proposition is that, which is expressed by a form of

words, of such a kind, and so arranged, as to compose a complete sentence....a sentence consisting of three parts ; one of which is called, *the subject* ; another, *the predicate* ; and that which forms the connexion between the subject and the predicate, is called the *copula*.

The following sentences are propositions ; viz. God is an Omnipotent Being. The soul is an immaterial substance. Man is a free agent. In the first of these sentences, the term, God, expresses the subject of the proposition ; the term, an Omnipotent Being, expresses the predicate ; and the term, is, expresses the connexion subsisting between the subject and predicate ; and so of the rest.

It is not necessary, however, that propositions should always be expressed, exactly in the same form, or by the same number of words. Thus, for instance, if we were to form a proposition relating to the existence of matter, we might indifferently say, matter is an actual existence ; or, matter exists ; or, matter is something that exists ; or, matter has an existence, &c.

Propositions have commonly been divided into affirmative and negative ; but such a division is not only unnecessary, but also improper. For every proposition, properly so called, is affirmative. For it is not true, that what is called, a negative proposition, is, strictly speaking, a proposition itself ; it is only something that *relates* to a proposition. Thus, for instance, when we say, That twice two is not seven ; all that we mean, in this case, is only to say, That the proposition, “ Twice two is seven,” is not true.

A similar observation may be made, respecting all other negative forms of speaking. Therefore, instead of

distinguishing propositions into affirmative and negative, we shall consider them all as being affirmative. Every thing, that can with propriety be called a proposition, is a direct affirmation ; an affirmation, which is sometimes true, and sometimes not true ; that is, an affirmation, which sometimes agrees with its being true, and sometimes agrees with its not being true.

When the subject of any proposition is the same as the predicate ; then that proposition is said to be true. To give an example by way of illustration ; if what is expressed by the term “ God,” is the same as what is expressed by the term, “ an Omnipotent Being ;” then the proposition, “ God is an Omnipotent Being,” is a true proposition. That is ; when the subject and the predicate of any proposition are both one and the same ; then that proposition is true ; otherwise, it is not true. For instance, with regard to the following proposition : “ Man is a free agent ;” if the subject, expressed by the term, “ man,” is the same as, that is, coincident with, the predicate, expressed by the term, “ a free agent ;” then the proposition is true. Again ; with regard to the proposition ; “ The human soul is a material substance ;” if the term, “ the human soul,” which constitutes the subject of the proposition, is expressive of the same thing, as the term, “ a material substance,” which constitutes the predicate ; then the proposition is true ; but if the human soul and a material substance are not both one and the same ; then the proposition is not true.

Hence we see wherein consists the universal distinction between a true proposition, and any one that is not true. Every proposition, the subject of which is the same as the predicate, is, as we have said, a true propo-

sition ; and every proposition, the subject of which is not the same as the predicate, is a proposition which is not true.

Any proposition, *considered* as being true, (whether the proposition, considered in itself, is actually true or not) is what we call the proposition's being true ; and any proposition, *considered* as not being true, (whether the proposition, considered in itself, is actually true or not) is what we call, the proposition's not being true.

We shall now proceed to observe : That the actual *truth* of a proposition consists in the *agreement* of the proposition itself with its being true or not true. And truth may be denominated *affirmative* or *negative*, according as the *agreement* is on the affirmative or negative side.

With regard to any proposition ; if its being true, or, if its not being true, is *something*, in distinction from *nothing* ; then every thing, in the universal system, is *consistent* with the given proposition's being true, or with its not being true. And this *universal consistency* constitutes what we call, *possibility*.

The possibility of any proposition's being true, may be called, *affirmative* ; and the possibility of its not being true, may, for the sake of distinction, be called, *negative*.

In respect to the present, or any past time, every proposition has an affirmative or negative possibility ; but not both. In respect to the future, some propositions have only an affirmative ; some have only a negative ; and some have both an affirmative and negative possibility. When there is only an affirmative possibility, it is then called affirmative *necessity* ; when there is only a

negative possibility, it is then called, negative necessity or *impossibility*. When there is an affirmative and negative possibility ; then this state of things is called, *contingence*. And there is in some cases, such a thing as contingency, in respect to the future ; but never in respect to the present, nor the past.

It has been observed, That, with regard to any proposition, its being true universally consists in the proposition itself, considered as being true ; and its not being true consists in the proposition itself, considered as not being true.

We shall now proceed to observe ; That, with regard to any event, its being present universally consists in the event itself, considered as being present ; and its not being present consists in the event itself, considered as not being present.

If we take into consideration any proposed event ; we shall always find, that in respect to the *present time*, there is either a possibility of its being present, or a possibility of its not being present ; that is, in respect to the present we shall always find, that there is an affirmative or negative possibility....*one* or the *other* ; but never *both*. And the case is *sometimes*, but *not universally*, the same, in respect to the *future*. For in respect to the future, it is sometimes the case, that there is both an affirmative and a negative possibility ; that is, a possibility of the event's being present, and also a possibility of its not being present. There is not any thing more evident than this :

That the state of things, in respect to THE FUTURE is different in some cases, from what it is, in respect to THE PRESENT.

For though, in respect to the present, we never can admit an affirmative possibility *with* a negative; nor a negative *with* an affirmative; yet we may, in some cases, admit them BOTH, in respect to the FUTURE. And this may be done without any derogation from the divine foreknowledge. We may consistently ascribe to the Deity a twofold power, with respect to some *future* events, and yet, at the same time, inviolably maintain his infinite knowledge of all things past, present, and future.

It has been already observed; That sometimes there are (not in respect to the present, but) in respect to the future, two possibilities, with relation to the same proposition or event. And when this is the case, one or the other of the two possibilities may be removed; and then the remaining one will be the same as necessity.

If it should be inquired; To whom does this twofold power belong, in which are implied the two possibilities that have been mentioned? We answer; It does now belong, and from all eternity has belonged, to the Deity; whose sole prerogative it is to retain both of the possibilities, implied in that twofold power, with which he has eternally been invested, till the arrival of that future time, to which they now both relate; and when the proper time has actually arrived, he will then, just according as he sees fit, remove one of the two possibilities and retain the other. And by this exertion of his power, in thus removing contingency and introducing necessity, he will turn the scale on the affirmative or negative side, respecting that proposition or event, to which the two possibilities, while there was a balance of power, had a previous relation.

And now, perhaps, you may be disposed to inquire ; If all power belongs to the Deity ; and if it is he alone, who holds the balance, till he himself sees fit, by the exertion of his own power, to turn the scale ; then what remains for *us* to do ?

Though this is not the proper place to give a particular answer to this inquiry ; yet being unwilling to intirely pass it over in silence, we shall, for the present, just observe, in general :

First ; That in all cases, in which there is only *one* possibility, in respect to any future time, there remains *nothing* for us to do : because all, that ever can be done, is done already ; for this *one possibility* is the same as *necessity* ; and necessity admits of no alteration. There being only one possibility, there is no balance of power ; nothing, therefore, is required to be done to turn the scale ; because, the power being all on one side, the scale is already turned. Consequently, the Deity never will, in this case, make any exertion to change the state of things ; therefore, he will never remove, but will always retain, the same possibility, which he now retains.

But secondly ; in the case of there being *two* possibilities, in respect to any future time, which, in some instances, is a real, and to us a most important matter of fact ; then there is something for us to do. For in this case, there is a balance of power in the hand of the Deity : and it remains for him to turn the scale ; and he can turn it either way ; that is, on the affirmative or negative side....he can turn it for us or against us....he can so turn it, that our happiness or misery will be the necessary consequence. Hence it follows :

That we are absolutely in the hand of the Deity ; and

intirely at his disposal. He can save or destroy : and not only *can*, but certainly *will*. For it is inconsistent with the perfection of his nature to remain in a state of neutrality. Therefore, since it is the Deity alone, who holds the balance of power, and since he will, just according as he sees fit, turn the scale, it belongs to us to take that side, which he has directed, and with infinite authority commanded us to take ; for that is the right side ; or, in the language of scripture, it is “the right hand of power.” (Matt. xxvi. 64. Mark xiv. 62. Luke xxii. 69.) This is that side, on which we are to take hold of one term of the Deity’s twofold power, so that we may make peace with him. His language to every finite free agent is ; “Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me.” (Isa. xxvii. 5.)

When there are two possibilities, an affirmative and a negative ; then we have a *moral* liberty to take hold of the Divine power on *one* side ; viz. on the *right* side, and that only. And that we should actually do this, is the express will of the Deity, respecting our conduct. But though we have no *moral* liberty to do any thing, and the Deity has no *will* respecting *our* conduct, but only what has now been mentioned ; yet we have a *natural* liberty to take hold of the possibility, that is, the Divine power, on either side. And, whatever side we take ; or whatever the consequence, with regard to us, may be ; it is the universal and eternal *Will* of the Deity, respecting his *own conduct*, to retain the possibility on the same side ; and to remit, that is, remove it, on the other.

Therefore, if we take hold of his power to make us eternally happy ; then he will retain the possibility of

our eternal happiness ; and remit the possibility of our eternal misery ; but if, in direct opposition to his most urgent invitation, and express command ; and consequently, in direct opposition to *his will*, respecting *our conduct*, we take hold of his power to make us eternally miserable ; then he will retain the possibility of our eternal misery ; and remit the whole possibility of all our happiness.

The *WILL* of the Deity, respecting his *own conduct*, in turning the scale, by which our final state is to be forever decided, without any possibility of being reversed, is absolutely inflexible beyond all contradiction or control. Hence we read ; That he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, &c. (Dan. iv. 35.) That he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. (Eph. i. 11.) That his counsel shall stand, &c. (Isa. xli. 10.)

Though we have already made some general observations respecting propositions, possibility, necessity, &c. yet since these are things, of which we have frequent occasion to speak, and which are very often not clearly understood ; and since they are to be ranked among the most important objects of our perception ; we shall now proceed to take a more particular view of this branch of the subject.

Propositions are perfectly distinct from matter or magnitude of any kind. It is the property of magnitude in general, to be small or great, low or high, broad or narrow, round or square, &c. and of matter, in particular, to be light or heavy, in motion or at rest, solid or fluid, hard or soft, rough or smooth, &c....none of which properties, literally taken, can ever belong to propositions.

Of propositions there are two general classes. To one class belong all true propositions ; and all propositions, which are not true, belong to the other.

It is the universal property of every proposition to have an agreement with its being true ; or an agreement with its not being true.

The agreement of any proposition with its being true is what we call, the affirmative truth of the proposition. And the agreement of any proposition with its not being true is what, for the sake of distinction, we call, the negative truth of the proposition. All truth, therefore, whether affirmative or negative, consists in agreement ; that is, in the agreement of any proposition with its being true, or with its not being true.

With regard to any proposition's being true, it is universally the case, that it is something with which every thing is consistent, or else it is nothing. So likewise with regard to any proposition's not being true, it is universally the case, that it is something with which every thing is consistent, or else it is nothing.

In the TRUTH of the principle, *That every thing is consistent with any given proposition's being true*, universally consists the POSSIBILITY of the given proposition's being true. If any thing is inconsistent with any given proposition's being true ; then the given proposition's being true is *nothing*, that is, there is no such thing as its being true.

Therefore, if any given proposition's being true is *any thing*, in distinction from absolute *nothing* ; then every thing is consistent with the given proposition's being true ; or which is the same, there is a real POSSIBILITY of the given proposition's being true.

Hence we may see wherein possibility consists ; it consists in UNIVERSAL CONSISTENCY. For to say, That *every thing is consistent* with any given proposition's being true, is the same as to say, That there is a *possibility* of the given proposition's being true. To say, That every thing is consistent with any proposition's not being true, is the same as to say, That there is a possibility of the proposition's not being true.

To say, That every thing is consistent with any event's being present, is the same as to say, That there is a possibility of its being present. Once more ; to say, That every thing is consistent with any event's not being present, is the same as to say, That there is a possibility of the event's not being present.

Having ascertained what is implied in the possibility of any proposition's being true or not true ; and what is implied in the possibility of any event's being present or not present ; there will be no difficulty in understanding what is meant by contingency and necessity.

When possibility is all on one side, without any on the opposite side to counterbalance it, then it is denominated *necessity*. When there is, what we call, *a balance of power*, implying an equal possibility, on each side ; then there is that state of things, which we call, *contingence*. And though there is no such state of things, in respect to the present nor the past ; yet there often is, in respect to the future. But whenever the scale is turned ; that is, whenever one of the two possibilities comes to be actually removed, which will inevitably be the case, when the future time, to which they have a previous relation, comes to be actually present, then the remaining possibility will be the same as necessity. Hence we may see

wherein contingency consists, and what it is that constitutes the distinction between contingency and necessity.

This distinction consists in the difference between what the state of things now is, in respect to some future time, and what it will be, when that future time comes to be actually present. For now, previous to the arrival of that future time, there are *two* possibilities; whereas then, when the time actually arrives, there will be but only *one*. Since there is now a possibility on each side; there is now, therefore, a balance of power; and consequently no necessity on either side: but then, by the removal of one of the possibilities, the scale will be turned, which will leave the remaining possibility in a state of necessity.

The difference between what the state of things is, in respect to the time, which is now future, and what it will be, when the future time comes to be present, is the whole foundation of all liberty. Whenever necessity is introduced, then all liberty, in respect to that time, to which the necessity relates, is intirely at an end. Liberty universally presupposes an equal possibility on each side; that is, a balance of power, with relation to future time.

It belongs to the Deity, and to him alone, to hold the balance; and to him alone it belongs to turn the scale; and what *we* have to do is to take one side or the other, just according to his direction; with which, if we actually comply, then he will see fit to turn the scale in our favour; and thus cause peace and safety, with regard to us, to be the happy result. But if, contrary to his direction, invitation, and command, we take the opposite side; viz. that side concerning which he has given us an express prohibition; saying, "Oh do not this abomina-

ble thing that I hate ;” (Jer. xliv. 4.) then, though our conduct, in thus violating his law, will be absolutely wrong ; yet this, from the very nature of the case, will render it perfectly right and fit, that he, in his conduct, should turn the scale against us. And though misery, on our part, even hopeless and eternal misery, should be the inexpressibly dreadful and inevitable consequence ; yet no room will be left for any, not even the least, reasonable complaint against him, as being tyrannical or unjust.

In this case, the Deity, while he acts according to the sovereign pleasure of his will, respecting his own conduct, in turning the scale against us, by retaining the possibility of our final misery and removing the possibility of our final happiness ; he does, at the same time, manifest towards us his infinite displeasure for our conduct in violating his holy law. And while he is thus conducting, who is there, throughout the whole intelligent system, that “ can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou ?” (Dan. iv. 35.)

It has been observed, That a possibility on each side, that is, a balance of power, in respect to the time, which is now future, is the foundation of all liberty ; and that when necessity is introduced, by turning the scale, then liberty is at an end. Hence may arise the following inquiries :

Whether those, who will be finally admitted to a confirmed state of perfect happiness, and consequently will, in that respect, be in a state of necessity, will not then meet with the loss of all their liberty ?

We answer ; That they will, indeed, meet with the loss (if propriety would admit the use of the term) of

all the liberty of ever conducting wrong ; and therefore will have no possibility of ever being miserable. But, in every other respect, they will have all the liberty, that can be consistent with the perfection of their nature, or suitable to their dignified character. It is true ; there will then be no balance of power, in respect to their future happiness and misery ; for the Deity, by so turning the scale, in relation to those two amazing events, as to forever remove the possibility of misery, will introduce, on the side of happiness, an unalterable necessity. But yet there will still remain a balance of power, and consequently liberty, in respect to an infinite variety of delightful objects, contained in the treasures of eternity. Which objects the Deity will, according to the pleasure of those, who have chosen him for their final portion, be forever introducing to their view, in the most agreeable succession.

For in the garden of celestial paradise there will be no forbidden tree ; therefore of all the trees, without exception, the blessed inhabitants will always be allowed to freely eat : and consequently they will have, in respect to every thing that can be desirable, the most perfect liberty.

There may now be another inquiry of a very different kind from the preceding one.

What will become of those, who will be finally found on the wrong side ; and against whom, consequently, the Deity will turn the scale, in respect to their eternal state, by removing all possibility of their future happiness, and therefore introducing the inflexible necessity of their eternal misery ? What liberty will be left for them to enjoy ?

In answer to this inquiry it must be observed ; That

in respect to those wretched beings, to whom this question relates, all their liberty will be absolutely brought to a final end. The whole balance of power, with regard to them, being intirely lost, and lost forever; and consequently all their liberty being utterly gone, to be restored no more; nothing will be left for them to *do*; all, therefore, that will remain for them, will be to *suffer*; by continually sinking deeper and deeper beneath the inconceivable weight of the ceaseless wrath of an offended God.

From the observations that have been made and illustrated, we may see what is the nature of possibility, and the nature of necessity; and wherein the distinction between them universally consists.

Whenever there is a possibility on the affirmative and negative side; which is often the case, in respect to future time; then there is possibility without necessity; that is, there is contingency; and therefore, in this case, there is liberty. And consequently, it remains for us to take one side or the other; and according to the side which we shall take (for we must take one side or the other; though we are at liberty which it shall be, in particular) so the Deity, who now holds the balance, will turn the scale; and we must take the consequence, whatever it may be. But when there is a possibility only on one side; then that possibility, whether it is affirmative or negative, is the same as necessity. In this case, we have nothing to do; but must let the state of things remain as it is; and must unavoidably submit to just such a consequence (whether, with regard to us, it is good or bad) as this necessity requires.

Since a right understanding of the nature of proposi-

tions, and what relates to them (viz. possibility, necessity, &c.) is of the greatest importance, we shall, in order to exhibit as clear a view as possible of this branch of the subject, make the following remarks :

1. A proposition is something, which is expressed by a certain form of words, arranged in such order as to compose a complete sentence, consisting of three distinct parts ; all which, taken together, constitute an affirmation. For example : “ The soul is an immaterial substance.” The first part of this sentence....the soul....is called the subject of the proposition : the last part....an immaterial substance....is called, the predicate ; and the term....is....which connects the subject and the predicate, is called, the copula ; and is that, which is essential to the nature of the affirmation.

2. Propositions may be distinguished from every thing else by the effect, which they are calculated, when expressed by written or vocal language, to produce on the mind.

It is the nature of propositions, in distinction from all other objects of thought, to produce that peculiar kind of perception, which is called, *belief* : which, when it is imperfect, is denominated, *doubt* ; but when it is perfect, we give it the appellation of *knowledge*.

3. Every proposition is something that has been from eternity, and will always continue to be : Propositions, therefore, are not to be numbered among created existences.

4. Propositions are the foundation of all our hopes and fears....of all our joys and sorrows : they can raise the soul to the highest rapture, or sink it to a state of the deepest anguish. We may well suppose, that the propo-

sition, announced by the great Jehovah, to Abraham, his servant, must have had a very peculiar effect on the mind of that eminent saint; "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. i. 15.)

We see what a wonderful impression was made, by one short sentence, in the form of a proposition, on Jacob's sons when in Egypt, standing before the governor of the land: "I am Joseph, your brother." So great was the force of this proposition, as to deprive, for a while, those to whom it was exhibited, of the power of speech. (Gen. xlv. 3.)

We see likewise how deeply the mind of David was affected, when he received from one of his servants a message, in which was implied the following proposition: "Absalom is dead."

"And the king was much moved," says the sacred historian, and he went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; "and as he went, thus he said; O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom: would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son." (2 Sam. xviii. 33.)

5. By propositions is excited the activity of the busy millions of mankind in the endless variety of their plans and pursuits. From the influence of propositions operating on the mind, have originated all the great events and important revolutions, which stand recorded on the page of history.

In consequence of propositions, exhibited to public view, by the rulers of nations, warlike preparations have been made; and vast armies been collected on the embattled field: where the dreadful blast of the bloody trumpet....the stunning sound of the thundering cannon,

with the noise of smaller instruments of death....the ghastly visages of the dead; and the dismal groans of the dying....all mingled together, in horrid confusion.... have melted the eye, and wounded the ear of humanity.

It is not necessary, however, that we should, when treating on this subject, be wholly confined to the dark side of the picture; therefore, we may proceed to observe :

6. That there are propositions, which, when seen in their true light, are capable of inspiring the mind with the noblest sentiments, and opening to view the most sublime prospects.

Out of the vast variety of propositions of this kind, we shall, at present, only just give an instance of one or two, taken from the writings of St. Paul.

“Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceediug and eternal weight of glory : while we look not at the things which are seen ; but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal : but the things which are not seen are eternal.” “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8.)

7. On certain propositions, relative to the divine existence and perfections, is intirely founded all the true regard, that ever can be paid to the Deity. For since it is impossible, that we should have an immediate view of

him, as he is in himself, we must, therefore, regard him according to the real truth of those propositions, which are expressive of his blessed nature and glorious attributes.

8. All propositions are reducible to two general classes; to one class belongs every true proposition; and every proposition, which is not true, belongs to the other.

Every proposition, the subject of which is the same as the predicate, is a true proposition; and every proposition, the subject of which is not the same as the predicate, is a proposition, which is not true. Hence it follows:

9. That every proposition must be considered as being true, or as not being true.

In the AGREEMENT of any proposition with its being true; or in the AGREEMENT of any proposition with its not being true, all actual TRUTH universally consists.

Actual truth may be distinguished into affirmative and negative. The agreement of any proposition with its being true constitutes actual affirmative truth; and the agreement of any proposition with its not being true constitutes actual negative truth.

10. If every thing is consistent with any proposition's being true; then there is a possibility of the proposition's being true. And if every thing is consistent with any proposition's not being true; then there is a possibility of the proposition's not being true.

Possibility, as well as actual truth, may be distinguished into affirmative and negative.

11. From what has been observed, it is evident, that there is a distinction between actual truth and possibility: for possibility is of a more extensive nature than ac-

tual truth. Actual truth consists in the agreement of any proposition with its being true ; or in the agreement of any proposition with its not being true. But possibility is the same as universal consistency.

12. Any given proposition is *conditionally* true when some *other* proposition's being true agrees with the *given* proposition's being true.

Thus, for example, it is *conditionally* true, That you will be eternally happy. If you are actually united to the Mediator ; then, on this condition, that is, admitting this to be true, it follows, That you will be eternally happy. In this instance ; its being true, "That you are actually united to the Mediator," agrees with its being true, "That you will be eternally happy."

Hence you may see wherein it is, that conditional truth universally consists. Assume any one proposition whatever : then if any other proposition's being true agrees with the assumed proposition's being true, the assumed proposition is *conditionally* true.

"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die : but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.)

We here have an instance in which there are two propositions, both of which are *conditionally* true. The two propositions are these : "Ye shall die"...."Ye shall live." The apostle here evidently has reference to eternal death and eternal life. It is evident, therefore, that the two propositions are not both of them *actually* true ; but it is certain that both of them are *conditionally* true. For its being true : "That ye live after the flesh," agrees with its being true, "That ye shall die." And its being true : "That ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds

of the body," agrees with its being true : " That ye shall live."

From the preceding observations it is evident ; That actual truth, possibility, and conditional truth are all distinct from each other.

In order to illustrate the nature of actual and conditional truth ; which will be found by all, who examine it with serious attention, to be a subject of the highest importance ; let us select, for an example, any one, who is now in an unrenewed state ; or, in the language of scripture, in a state of spiritual death ; but who is, at the same time, an inhabitant of the present world, and a probationer for eternity.

With regard to a person of this description, there are two propositions, neither of which is now absolutely true ; but yet they are, at the same time, both of them conditionally true.

The two propositions, both of which are conditionally true with relation to the person, whose case has been described, are the following ; He will be eternally happy....he will be eternally miserable.

In this case, there are two conditions ; one of which consists in its being true, that the person is renewed ; and the other consists in its not being true that he is renewed.

These two conditions are of such a nature, that there is no necessity that they should always continue to be what they now are ; but such is their nature, that either of them may, at any time, be intirely removed. It is, however, absolutely impossible that both of them should fail. Consequently there is an absolute necessity, in general, that one or the other of them should forever remain.

If the first condition, consisting in its being true :

“That the person is renewed,” should be confirmed (which can be done only by a special application to the Deity through the Mediator) then the opposite condition will, at the same time, be intirely removed. In this case, therefore, it will become absolutely and unalterably true ; That the person (whose case is now the subject of consideration) will be eternally happy ; and therefore the opposite proposition (viz. that he will be eternally miserable) will forever cease to be even conditionally true ; that is, the possibility of its being true will be intirely removed.

But such is the nature of the first condition, that it will, unless it should be previously confirmed, certainly be removed by natural death. And when the first condition is once removed ; then the opposite condition will become unalterably confirmed. And in this case, it will become absolutely true ; That the person will be eternally miserable ; and therefore it will cease to be even conditionally true ; That he will be happy.

From what has been observed, it is evident, That both the eternal happiness and the eternal misery of a person, who is an inhabitant of the present world, and yet at the same time, is in an unrenewed state, are intirely suspended on certain conditions. The first of these conditions ; or that, on which the person’s eternal happiness intirely depends, consists in his being renewed previous to natural death : the other, or that, of which, if it should once be confirmed, eternal misery will be the certain and inevitable consequence, consists in the person’s remaining in an unrenewed state, till natural death actually arrives.

Both of these conditions will remain as they are, till one or the other is confirmed ; it is certain, however,

that they will not long continue in their present unconfirmed state. For unless the first condition ; or that, on which eternal happiness intirely depends, should, by the effectual exercise of practical faith in the Mediator, be soon confirmed ; then natural death, which is near at hand, will very shortly confirm the opposite condition ; or that of which, if once confirmed, eternal misery will be the inevitable consequence.

And now, since the first condition, in its present unconfirmed state, is liable, every moment, to be forever removed ; having nothing to prevent the removal of it, but only the continuance of natural life, than which there is not any thing more precarious ; Who is there, whose mind is susceptible of any serious impression, that can refrain from adopting the poet's exclamation ?

“ Great God ! on what a slender thread,
“ Hang everlasting things !
“ Th' eternal states of all the dead,
“ Upon life's feeble strings !”

And now, reader, permit the solemn inquiry to be made with particular application to yourself. In what state is the *condition*, on which *your eternal happiness* depends?...Is it already confirmed ; that is, has it been actually fulfilled ? Or, in other words ; have you been renewed, by the special influences of the Holy Spirit ? Have you really passed from death to life ? If so, then you have a most sure and infallible title “ to an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away ; reserved in heaven for you.” (1 Pet. i. 4.)

But if the condition, on which your future eternity in respect to the particular mode of your existence, is

suspended, yet remains unconfirmed ; then the time is very swiftly advancing which will bring with it the irrevocable decision of your final state.

A due consideration of conditional truth is, as we have already observed, of very great importance ; and, therefore, is worthy of the most strict and impartial attention. Hence it is, that all those great and infinitely interesting truths, directly claiming our practical regard, which, in the sacred writings, are exhibited to view, are presented in a conditional form.

Respecting every impenitent sinner, who is an inhabitant of the present world, an eternal state of happiness or misery now hangs suspended on conditional truth. "He that believeth, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

Here he, who came into the world to bear witness to the truth, has expressly declared faith and unbelief to be the conditions of salvation and damnation.

To *conditional* truth, in distinction from that which is *absolute*, two sides belong : and therefore it may be true (that is, *conditionally* true) with respect to the same individual person ; That he will be perfectly happy ; and at the same time true, (that is *conditionally* true) that he will be perfectly miserable, through endless duration, in a future world. For "he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life : and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life : but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.) "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die : but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.)

From these words of the apostle, we see that there is conditional truth, on both sides of the question. It is con-

ditionally true, That ye shall live ; and at the same time, conditionally true, That ye shall die.

All the kind offers of mercy, and dreadful threatenings of vengeance, which a God of infinite goodness and inflexible justice has manifested to a sinful world, are founded on certain conditions ; which are of such a nature, that they must, within a short time, be, on one side or the other, inevitably fulfilled. And when that solemn period shall arrive, the scale will be irreversibly turned, by the hand of Omnipotence ; and then that, which is only *conditionally*, will become *absolutely*, and therefore *eternally*, true. That is ; that amazing and inconceivable state of happiness or misery, which is now future ; and being suspended on conditional truth, exists only in possibility, will then become actually present ; and all conditional truth being wholly removed from one side, absolute truth will, consequently, take intire possession of the other. Thus possibility will be changed to necessity ; and therefore the final state will be fixed for endless duration.

But why will it be fixed for endless duration ?

Because, in the divine government, as it relates to moral agents, there is an established order of things, which is absolutely unchangeable ; and which, therefore, can never be inverted ; for it is as immutable as the Deity himself. According to this order, of which we now speak, there is first, conditional truth on both sides ; but this, from the nature of it, being of temporary duration ; will not always continue to be the same as it is, in its original state ; but will be removed from one side, and thus give place to absolute truth, on the other. And absolute truth ; that is, necessity (for absolute truth and necessi-

ty are both one and the same) being once introduced, will remain forever.

This, then, being the unalterable order of things, in the universal system of the moral government of Jehovah, relative to finite intelligent beings, we may see that there is such a thing as making a transition from a conditional, to an absolute state. Or, in other terms, expressive of the same idea; there is such a thing as passing from a TEMPORARY, to an ETERNAL state; but the reverse of this is absolutely impossible. As the apostle says, in a particular case: "That was not first, which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." (1 Cor. xv. 46.) So we say, in general; That was not first, which is *absolute*; but that which is *conditional*; and afterward, that which is absolute. And since this is the irreversible order of things, we can pass; but we cannot repass: we can advance forward; but we cannot retrace our steps. The reason is, because we cannot violate the irrevocable decree of him, who has said; "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. xlv. 10.) Therefore, if we take a wrong course, and continue to pursue it, for a short time; then that, which is now only conditional, will become absolute; and then we never can return back again, to begin our course anew. This being the case, it is certainly a matter of the greatest importance, that we proceed with cautious steps; carefully committing ourselves to the guidance of that All-wise and Almighty Being, who holds the balance of power; and who will shortly turn the scale, and forever fix our final destiny.

From the preceding observations, it evidently follows,

That there is, in reality, such a thing as conditional truth, in distinction from that which is absolute; and also that conditional truth is to be considered as being first, in that order of things, which is unalterably established by the Supreme Ruler of the moral world.

Hence it is, that we are called upon; are kindly invited; and even with infinite authority commanded, to take an active part, in the grand, universal system. And the part, which we are to take, consists in our fulfilling certain conditions; even those, which are particularly prescribed, by consummate benevolence and infallible wisdom. And here it is worthy of special remark: That though it is absolutely certain, in general, that we must inevitably fulfil conditions of some kind or other; that is, conditions of life or death; yet the beneficent Author of our being has directly enjoined upon us the fulfilling of such conditions, and such only, as will be attended with a happy result. For life and death are set before us, and we are commanded to choose life, by fulfilling the condition on which life is suspended.

Very interesting, solemn, and affecting are the words of Moses, in his valedictory address to the children of Israel. "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe and do all his commandments, which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God shall set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come upon thee and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy

cattle, and the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in and when thou goest out....“ The Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee; if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways”....“ But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in and when thou goest out. See I have set before thee, this day, life and good, death and evil; in that I command thee this day, to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways and to keep his commandments, and his statutes and his judgments; that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God will bless thee, in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear; I denounce unto you, this day, that ye shall surely perish. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death; blessing and cursing: therefore choose life.” (Deut. xxviii. 1—6, 9, 15—19. xxx. 15—19.)

Thus you may see the nature and importance of that **CONDITIONAL TRUTH**, one side or the other of which, you must unavoidably take; for such is the universal constitution of things, that you cannot continue in a state

of neutrality. Which is the right side ; viz. the side that you ought to take, in order to insure a favourable result ; the moral Governor of the world has clearly exhibited to your view, by giving an express direction, and an absolute command. If, therefore, by deviating from his direction, and transgressing his command, you will be guilty of the horrid presumption of taking the wrong side ; then there will not be any thing whatever, not even infinite power and goodness itself, that can possibly save you from suffering the dreadful consequence, in its fullest extent and longest duration. For it is absolutely impossible that infinite power and goodness should ever contradict itself, by reversing the irreversible order of things.

In tracing the principles of moral science it is of essential importance, always to keep in view the distinction between *conditional* and *absolute* truth ; and likewise the order of arrangement, which is assigned to these two distinct kinds of truth, by the Supreme Ruler, in his moral government over finite free agents. He, being invested with Omnipotence, has the intire and independent control of the final and eternal destinies of all created intelligent beings ; and has, therefore, subjected them all to a state of absolute dependence on himself.

All conditional truth, which is of any importance, is to be considered as being first, in the order of things ; that is, prior, in order of time, to absolute truth ; and also, as having a RIGHT and a WRONG side. The right side is always that, which, if admitted, will be attended with a happifying consequence ; and the opposite to this is the wrong side. Hence originates the whole system of that moral government, which the “blessed and only

Potentate" invariably exercises over his rational offspring. In relation to whom, therefore, it is unalterably fixed, as a universal rule, which admits of no exception: "That whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. vi. 7, 8.)

It is an observation, which cannot be too often repeated; That conditional truth is to be considered as being first in order; and as having a right and wrong side.

Hence there are two opposite consequences, both existing in possibility, previous to the actual existence of either, which are suspended on conditional truth. And this being the case, it is absolutely necessary, *in general*, that one or the other of these two opposite consequences should become actually present; and which, in particular, it shall be, must always be determined according to the condition, which will be previously admitted.

It is now absolutely necessary, with a *general necessity*, That you should, in some future period, reap one or the other of the following consequences; viz. happiness or misery, perfect in degree, and endless in duration.

Do you inquire; Which, in particular, it will actually be? The universal answer is; That according to the immutable law of Divine operation, "whatsoever you sow, that shall you also reap:" Or, in other words; the final consequence will always be inevitably determined according to the previously admitted condition. This is a rule from which the perfections of that great and glorious Being, who bears an uncontrollable sway, in the management of all the affairs of the universe, never will admit the least deviation.

Hence arises the strict accountability of all finite free agents to the Supreme Lawgiver and Universal Governor of all worlds.

In the revelation, which the Deity has made, respecting that order of things, which is the foundation of the moral conduct of free agents, it is not stated ; That life, and nothing but life, is absolutely set before them, on the one hand : nor that death, and nothing but death, is absolutely set before them on the other : but the true statement is ; That life and death, each being suspended on a previous condition, are BOTH set before them ; also, that it is absolutely necessary, in general, that the previous condition, on the one side or the other, should be admitted ; and therefore, that life or death, one or the other, just according to the previously admitted condition, should be the inevitable consequence.

It is worthy of special remark ; That conditional truth universally implies possibility. Hence it is always the case, without exception ; That, whatever is conditionally true, is possible ; and therefore, whatever is impossible, is not conditionally true. Again ; absolute truth universally implies necessity. And there is always the same distinction between conditional, and absolute truth, as there is between possibility and necessity. It must be observed, That conditional, in distinction from absolute, truth ; or, which is the same ; possibility, in distinction from necessity, always has a relation to *future time*. For every thing, in respect to the present and the past, is unalterably fixed ; being either in a state of absolute necessity or absolute impossibility. But with relation to the future, the case, though not universally, yet in respect to some things, is essentially different. And this is the

foundation of that order of things, in the moral world, in which conditional truth is not only distinct from, but also antecedent to, absolute truth.

It is, therefore, in respect to the FUTURE, that the Deity holds the balance of power : having life in one scale, and death in the other. And while the Deity is thus holding the balance, finite free agents have a *natural* liberty to take either side. And at the same time, when they have this natural liberty ; that Almighty Being to whom alone all power belongs, and who alone holds the balance of power, is calling upon, directing, and commanding them to take the right side ; that it may be consistent for him, according to his universal plan of operation, to turn the scale in their favour ; and thus forever secure their happiness. But let them take which side they will, (and one side or the other they must unavoidably take) they will meet the Deity on the *same* side. And on that side, whichever it may be, he, who previously holds the balance, will turn the scale ; and thus by introducing absolute, instead of conditional truth, that is, by introducing necessity instead of possibility, will unalterably fix their final state ; so that they never can change sides any more.

Thus, probationary sinner, whoever you are, you may see (and it is of the highest importance, that you should deeply *feel*, as well as see) your intire and absolute dependence on him, who holds in his hand, the power of life and death. To him you must be made to bow ; and the effects of his power, operating in the production of your happiness or misery, you must shortly feel. For though he is now holding the balance, on which life and death, each extending through endless futurity, hang

suspended, waiting for you to take your side ; yet this will not long continue to be the case ; for the solemn crisis, inconceivably delightful or dreadful, is fast approaching, when he will turn the scale, and decide, without any possibility of alteration, your eternal destiny. Say not, that because you are absolutely dependent on the Deity, therefore there is nothing you can do. But remember : That from this very consideration ; viz. the consideration of your absolute dependence, it follows ; That it is necessary, with a general necessity, that you should do *something*. And this point being already settled by a decree, which is as immutable as the divine existence ; there is, therefore, now no room for the question, Whether you can, or will, do any thing, or not ? But the grand, and the only question is that, which relates to *what* you will do. Will you take the right side, or the wrong ? For one side or the other you must take ; because it is impossible, that you should remain in a state of neutrality. Therefore, “acquaint now thyself with God and be at peace : thereby good shall come out of thee.” (Job xxii. 21.) If you inquire ; How this acquaintance with God is to be formed ? The answer is ; It must be done by taking hold of the right hand of his power. For this is agreeable to the divine direction : “Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me ; and he shall make peace with me.” (Isa. xxvii. 5.)

Conditional truth, considered as relating to the future and eternal state of things, has, according to what has been already observed, a right and a wrong side ; and it is originally *antecedent* to absolute truth, in that order of things, belonging to the universal government of the Su-

preme Disposer of all events ; and particularly those events of endless consequence, to which the conduct of moral agents has a special relation.

An inquiry may now arise ; Whether ALL TRUTH is primarily of a *conditional* nature ; and in the established order of things, *antecedent* to absolute truth ? We answer : This is far from being the case. For there is a universal system of original absolute truth ; remaining from eternity to eternity, immutably the same. And in this universal, immutable, and eternal system, is contained all that special conditional truth, which, in its original state, has, as we have said, a right and a wrong side ; and is, according to the established order of things, in the moral government of the Deity, antecedent to that absolute truth, of endless consequence, which is suspended on the preceding conditional truth. On this principle, therefore, it is, that the great Jehovah sustains the character of moral Governor of the universe. Hence also originates the accountability of all created free agents to their infinite Creator. And therefore it follows : That there is a foundation for a probationary state ; and that this probationary state is of a temporary nature ; and that, having once expired, it can never be renewed. And on this same principle, likewise, is founded the whole system of eternal rewards and punishments.

To you, therefore, who are a momentary probationer for eternity, it is of the highest and most interesting importance, to pay a suitable and a seasonable attention to the station, you now hold, in that order of things, according to which, you must be carried forward, and soon make your entrance into a state, from which you can never return.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE DIVINE POWER.

THIS important subject will be introduced by giving an answer to the inquiry ; What is power ?

And here it may be observed, in general ; That power is the very same, without distinction, as *possibility*. Hence there is no such thing as power without possibility ; nor any such thing as possibility without power.

Since power is the same as possibility, it is important, that possibility should be definitely explained.

POSSIBILITY is the same as UNIVERSAL CONSISTENCY. And what is meant by "universal consistency," may be understood thus : Assume any proposition whatever. Then, in the simple, absolute TRUTH of the principle, That every thing, through the whole system, which is actually present, is CONSISTENT with the proposition's BEING TRUE, OR with its NOT BEING TRUE, consists what we call UNIVERSAL CONSISTENCY, that is, POSSIBILITY ; for they are both one and the same.

ACTUAL TRUTH universally consists in the ACTUAL AGREEMENT of any particular proposition with its BEING TRUE, or with its NOT BEING TRUE. And actual truth may be denominated affirmative or negative, just according as the agreement, which the proposition has with its being true or not true, is on the affirmative or negative side. From these definitions it follows : That possibility is distinct from actual truth ; and that the former is of a much more extensive nature, than the latter.

There are many things that are not now actually true ; which will be actually or absolutely true, in some future

period; but all, that ever will, through endless futurity, be *possible*, is now, and from all eternity has been, possible. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance, that the distinction between possibility, and absolute truth, that is, necessity, should always be kept in view. Possibility and power are, as we have said, both one and the same thing; for that which, when considered with relation to any particular proposition or event, we call *possibility*, is the very same, as that which, when considered as belonging to the Deity, we call *power*. Therefore, the *possibility* of an event and the *power* of the Deity are both one and the same.

Having explained what is to be understood by possibility, or power, we shall now proceed to observe: That the Divine Mind, that is, the Deity, has a connexion, that is, an agreement, with all possibility; that is, all power. And this is what constitutes that awful and adorable divine perfection, which is called Omnipotence. This connexion or agreement extends, at one time, even in the present time, through a whole immensity; and does, at the same time, relate to every part of a boundless eternity. It is the universal nature of power or possibility to have a relation to TIME. It relates to the present, and also to every part of endless futurity. As it stands related to the present, it is always the case, without any exception, that it is only on one side. Hence it is absolutely impossible, that any thing whatever should be, and not be, in the same time; that is, in the present time. Consequently; every thing, throughout the universe, is, in respect to the present time, immutably fixed, without any possibility of alteration. And if this was universally the case, in respect to the *future*, as well as the

present ; then there would be no such thing in nature, as change : and, indeed, there would be no such thing as created mutable existence.

In respect to the present, there is, as we have observed, but only one case ; for in respect to the present, there is no possibility, but only on one side ; and all possibility, being wholly on one side, is for the sake of distinction, denominated, necessity. But in respect to the future, there are two cases. One is that, in which there is no possibility, but only on one side ; which possibility, therefore, is denominated NECESSITY. This case is that, which relates to the Deity with all his glorious perfections ; and comprehends all immutable existence, together with all unchangeable and eternal truth. That is ; it comprehends that absolute, universal system of boundless extent and endless duration, which peculiarly belongs “to the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only Wise God ;” as the immediate and invariable object of his infinite perception, glory, and happiness ; and which renders him completely independent of all the possible changes, that can ever be introduced into that system of mutable existence, emanating from himself, in consequence of the exercise of his Omnipotence, whereby he makes, to his rational creatures, a display of his declarative glory ; communicating to them, as large a share of happiness as their particular state and condition will admit. The other case, relating to the future, is that, in which there is a possibility on *both sides* ; and this twofold possibility constitutes what we call A BALANCE OF POWER. This is the foundation of the *exertion* of divine power. For the Deity exerts his power, by remitting the possibility, on one side, and retaining it, on the other.

Whenever possibility is remitted, that is, removed, from one side, and retained on the other; then the remaining possibility will become what is denominated necessity; and will, therefore, unavoidably introduce the event, whatever it may be, to which it relates.

There is one observation, which cannot be too often mentioned; viz. That ALL POWER belongs to the Deity. By his exertion of his own power, the whole material universe, composed of innumerable worlds, interspersed through immensity, was created; and from the exertion of his power flows, and will forever continue to flow, an endless variety of changes, in the grand, magnificent system of created existence. All power is in his hands; he alone holds the balance; and therefore he has the absolute control, even of necessity itself; which he can, just according as he shall see fit, introduce on either side. And consequently, if you take the right side, or the wrong, (and one side or the other you *must* take) then the Deity, who from eternity has held the balance, will turn the scale, either in your favour, or the contrary; just according to the particular side, on which you will be found. For to suppose, that whenever you take one side, (let it be which it will) the Deity will take the opposite side, is the same as to suppose, that he will not exert his power at all. For if, whenever you take one side, the Deity should retain the possibility, on the opposite side; then the possibility will be retained on both sides; and therefore, there will be no exertion of power. But this is inconsistent with the universal plan of divine operation. Consequently; whenever you actually take one side, which side soever it may be, the Deity will then so turn the scale, as to introduce necessity on the same

side, by remitting possibility, on the opposite side, and retaining it on the side you actually take. But previous to the scale's being turned, the Deity holds, in his hand, the possibility of your eternal happiness, on one side, and the possibility of your eternal misery, on the other ; and thus he sustains the character of the " one Lawgiver, who is able to SAVE and to DESTROY." Hence arises a most interesting inquiry : Which of those two possibilities will be retained, and which removed, when, *time* being past, the scale will be turned for *eternity*, and your final destiny unalterably decided forever ? In answer to this, you will, perhaps, reply : If all power belongs to the Deity, and he is the efficient cause of all effects ; then the whole must be referred to him, and he must determine the affair, just according as he sees fit....But the all-important inquiry still returns : What will the Deity see *fit* to do ? You will say ; That he is an absolute Sovereign, and therefore, that it does not belong to you to know, nor pretend to tell, what *he* will see fit to do. But you ought to remember ; That your saying this implies an acknowledgment of your having been intirely inattentive to the declarations of his will, respecting your own moral conduct. For though he is indeed an absolute Sovereign ; and consequently you are wholly dependent on him ; yet he has expressly told you, times without number, how he shall see fit to dispose of you, in the final result of things. That is ; he has expressly told you, That he shall certainly see fit to fix your endless state of perfect happiness or misery (both of which he now has in his power) just according to the side, on which you will be actually found, when the proper time arrives, for him to turn the scale. He now holds that aw-

ful balance of power, on which “hang everlasting things;” with you, therefore, it remains to answer the grand question; a question, which of all others, that ever can be proposed, is the most important; Which side of the Deity’s twofold power will you take? Will you take that, which implies the possibility of infinite good; or that, in which the possibility of infinite evil is implied; for these two the Deity now retains; but he will not long retain them both: one side or the other; that is, the right or the wrong, you must shortly take. And you may even now, with absolute certainty, know, in general, what will be the final result. For if you take the right side, there you will meet the Deity, clothed in smiles; or if you take the wrong side, you will also meet him there, arrayed in vengeance. This is a solemn thought....

Then let “this thought possess” your “breast,
“Where’er” you “rove, where’er” you “rest:
“Nor let” your “weaker passions dare
“Consent to sin....for God is there.”

Since the Deity has all power in his hands, and can turn it for, or against you; it is certainly of infinite importance to you, that you agree with him to exert it, so as to save you from misery, and introduce you into a state of happiness. Let it not be said, by way of objection: That the Deity will exert his own power just as he pleases, let you conduct as you will. For though this, considered in itself, is most certainly true; yet it will by no means follow, that your own conduct, in taking the right, or the wrong side, is to be considered as being indifferent, in this all-important affair. For according to the side you take; so will your final state be determin-

ed. This is agreeable to the immutable law of divine operation.

From the preceding observations, that have been made, with regard to power or possibility, it is clearly evident ; That it is not a created existence ; and that it does not consist in the modification, nor in the change of any created existence whatever. For it is universally the case, that all created existence, together with every change or modification, of which it is susceptible, always *presupposes* power. But since power is a reality ; and since it never was created, therefore all power, which is now actually contained in the universal system, has been from eternity. It originally belonged, and does still belong, to the Almighty Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all worlds, both visible and invisible. And since all power absolutely belongs to the Deity, therefore he is the universal, efficient cause of every effect, that takes place, in the whole system of mutable existence. He is the cause of every motion in the natural world ; from that of the smallest atom which floats in the air, to that of those amazing masses of matter, which regularly revolve around their central bodies, in the solar system, and in the immeasurable expanse of the starry firmament. And in the mental world, he is the cause of every sensation, of every thought, and of every volition. Thus we must ascribe all power to God ; and consider him as the efficient cause of all effects. “ For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory forever.” (Rom. xi. 36.)

And now it may, perhaps, not be improper nor unnecessary to give you a caution against two dangerous extremes, into one or the other of which, unless suitable

care is taken to prevent it, you are liable to fall ; and by falling into which, you may be involved in irretrievable error. One is your rejecting the important truth, that has now been advanced, relative to the divine power and the divine exertion ; that thereby you may free your mind from a sense of your absolute dependence on him, in whom you “ live, move, and have your being.” And the other is (to use the language of the apostle) your holding the truth in unrighteousness : that is, admitting the truth (admitting it, at least, in speculation) and then drawing from it false inferences. To the last of these, we shall, at present, pay a more particular attention ; because it is of a very specious nature and destructive tendency.

We will suppose, that you admit, as an incontrovertible principle ; That all the power there is, in the universal system, belongs to the Deity ; and that he is the efficient cause of all effects, from the most minute, to those of the greatest magnitude, that ever take place, both in the material and mental system. So far you do well ; for in so doing you admit a most important truth ; a truth, which justly claims your highest regard and practical improvement. But if, from admitting this most important truth, you should hence infer ; That all things are subjected to a state of inevitable necessity ; you would pervert the truth, in a most dreadful manner, and expose yourself to be lost in an endless maze of inextricable error. The system, that would result from this false conclusion, would be a labyrinth, full of intricate windings, which, being pursued for a while, would involve you in the awful danger of being led fatally astray ; so as to find yourself, at length, actually introduced within the grasp of that tremendous necessity, which, arresting you with a

strong and irresistible hand, and binding you fast, in chains of everlasting darkness, would leave no possibility of your ever returning back again to embrace and improve the truth from which you had departed. For, by admitting the erroneous supposition ; That every event has, from all eternity, been unalterably fixed by previous necessity, you do, as it were, (if propriety would admit the use of the expression) divest the Deity of half his original power, relative to the mutable system ; and leave no room for divine exertion. For divine exertion always does, in the very nature of it, always presuppose a balance of power ; implying on each side an equal possibility ; and divine exertion itself consists in the Deity's remitting the possibility, on one side, and retaining it, on the other. Thus the Deity, being invested with a two-fold power, holds in his hand the eternal destinies of his creatures ; and he, being Lord of necessity, can introduce it, by the exertion of his own power, whenever, and in respect to whatever, he pleases. For "He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" To him alone it belongs to say : "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Dan. iv. 35. Isa. xlv. 10.)

If, in obedience to his commands, you meet him on the right side, you will find yourself encircled in the arms of his everlasting mercy. But if you will deviate from the rule, which he has prescribed for your conduct, you will meet him on that side, where you must forever feel his vengeance, and hear his heart-rending voice, saying : "This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures

from me ; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood." (Jer. xiii. 25.)

The apostle James has expressly declared: That "there is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy." (James iv. 12.) Therefore, it is not the case ; That the Supreme Lawgiver has power only on *one* side, and none on the *other* ; but he has a *twofold* power...he holds in his hands, both the possibility of salvation, and also the possibility of destruction. One of these two possibilities, both of which are now present, and from all eternity have been present, he will retain, and the other, whenever the proper time shall arrive, he will remove. And thus, by the exertion of his power, consisting in his removing one of the possibilities, and retaining the other, he will introduce inflexible necessity, on one side ; viz. on that, where he retains the possibility. For one of the two possibilities, being retained without the other, will become coincident with necessity. And this necessity, being once introduced, will forever remain. For when the Sovereign Disposer of all effects, and the absolute Controller of that necessity, which involves the final destiny of his accountable creatures, once speaks the word, it will be done ; and when he commands, (by the exertion of his power) it will forever stand fast. (Psalm xxxiii. 9.)

Thus you may see, that the supposition : That all events have from eternity, been fixed, by a previous necessity, is intirely subversive of the order of things in the divine government ; is, in the highest degree, derogatory to the divine power ; is perfectly inconsistent with the immutable laws of divine operation ; and is directly contradictory to the principles of free agency, in finite be-

ings, and their moral accountability to their infinite Creator. For if the Deity possesses no power, but only on one side ; or, in other terms, importing the same thing ; if he is invested with no power, but only what consists in *necessity* ; then, where is there any foundation for divine exertion ? Can he alter the unalterable state of things ? Can he acquire any new power, which he never had before ? Can he place creatures in a probationary state ; prescribe for them a rule of duty, and set before them life on the one hand, and death on the other ? Can he be a “ Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy ? ” In a word : Can he sustain the character of moral Governor of the world ?

If, therefore, from the principle ; That the Deity is invested with infinite power, and that he is the efficient cause of every effect, that ever takes place, in the universal system, (which principle is most certainly true) you infer ; That all future events are now, and always have been, unalterably fixed by previous necessity ; then, respecting the divine power, you entertain (in speculation, at least) a view, which is essentially wrong, and of most dangerous consequence. For by supposing necessity, in relation to future events, to be prior to the exertion of divine power, you intirely invert the order of things. Because it is the Deity himself, who, being invested with a twofold power, relative to future events, and thus having the absolute control of necessity, does, by his own exertion, introduce it, in the administration of his moral government, at such times, and on such occasions, as he, in his infinite wisdom, sees fit. It is not, therefore, to be supposed ; That, with relation to future events, the Deity has no power, but only what consists in necessity ;

or, which is the same thing, that all future events are fixed, by a previous necessity. But the true state of the case is this: That the Deity is, previous to the introduction of necessity, invested with a twofold power, from the exertion of which, according to the dictates of infallible wisdom and impartial rectitude, necessity itself results; so far as it has relation to moral accountable beings, and the consequences of their conduct, in their taking the right or the wrong side.

But perhaps, after all, you will be ready to say: That, if it is not the case, that all future events are fixed by a previous necessity; then it is impossible that the Deity should have a certain foreknowledge of such events. Here, indeed, there seems to be a difficulty, which has the appearance of being hard to be removed. It is of importance, however, that you should always remember: That you ought not to attempt to vindicate the Deity's knowledge by derogating from his power. You may just as well deny his knowledge, as his power; you ought not, indeed, to do either. But in maintaining, that every future event is fixed by previous necessity, you deny the divine power, in such a manner as to imply a denial of all the moral perfections of the Deity; considered in relation to finite intelligent beings. For if he is originally invested with no power, but only what consists in necessity; then he is not the moral Governor of the world; and therefore, there is no moral accountability. But to such a rash conclusion as this; a conclusion so full of inconsistency and impiety, you can never arrive, without first violating the sacred rule: "Judge not according to appearance; but judge righteous judgment." (John vii. 24.)

CHAPTER VII.

ON DIVINE AGENCY.

THE Divine Agency is to be considered in a twofold view. First : as being that, which is implied in the eternal, vital ENERGY of the DIVINE MIND ITSELF ; and as that, which is absolutely essential to the very nature of the Deity, as sustaining the glorious character of the true, the living, and the eternal God ; and possessing an infinitely perfect, unchangeable felicity, intirely independent of every thing, that ever has taken place, or ever will take place, in the visible universe. And secondly : as it relates to the whole system of mutable existence, emanating from the Deity, in consequence of the exertion of his power ; whereby he is justly entitled to the character of Creator, Universal Benefactor, and Moral Governor.

SECTION FIRST.

On Divine Agency ; consisting in the eternal vital ENERGY of the Divine Mind.

First, then, we shall take a brief, general view of Divine Agency, considered as implying that, which is essential to the Being and Perfections of the Deity himself ; even that agency, whereby he is, with infinite propriety, designated by the appellation of “ THE LIVING GOD.” (See Deut. v. 26. Josh. iii. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36. 2 Kings xix. 4, 16.) And we must introduce this solemn subject by making the following general statement ; a statement, which demands the most profound respect and reverential awe.

In the AGREEMENT of universal, immutable, absolute perfection with itself consists the Divine Mind ; and this is the same as the ABSOLUTE PRESENT....the adorable I AM. To the Divine Mind, that is, the Deity, necessarily belongs universal, immutable, and eternal perception : perception which perfectly corresponds to its object : which object is immensity, that is, absolute perfection. And since the object of divine perception is *absolute* perfection ; therefore, divine perception itself is *relative* perfection ; and may with propriety be called the perfection of perfection. And in the agreement of divine perception with its object ; that is, in the agreement of *relative*, with *absolute* perfection, consists the present TIME. For such is the nature of divine perception, as to render it necessary that it should have, not one agreement only, but also that it should have an eternal agreement ; or which is the very same thing ; that it should have an infinite number of agreements. And this infinite number of agreements ; or which is the same thing ; this eternal agreement, of divine perception with its object, is what we call ETERNITY : a term of the most awful and solemn import. A whole eternity, not in successive parts, one following another, in an endless series ; but the sum of all the parts of eternity, in connexion with itself, has been present. The connexion of a whole eternity with itself is now past ; and a separate eternity is now future. And with a whole future eternity the PRESENT TIME is now connected. And, as we have already observed : by *the present time* is to be understood the AGREEMENT of divine perception with its object : that is, the agreement of infinite *relative*, with infinite *absolute*, perfection.

Having made the preceding statement, the way is now prepared for the introduction of the following universal principle :

That the divine agency, considered as being the same as the eternal VITAL ENERGY of the DIVINE MIND, is that, from which necessarily results the endless transition of TIME from the future to the present and from the present to the past. For :

When that relative agreement...that individual time, which is now present, is past, it will then be separated from the future : and, being thus separated, it will produce the want of one future time ; which one time, being wanting in the future, will be present : and, after having been once present, it will then be past ; and by being past, that is, separated from the future, it will produce the want of another future time ; and therefore another time will be present, &c. as before. And thus the amazing progression will be continually advancing on, without any intermission, in one continued series, extending forward through the whole of a boundless eternity. For it is impossible, that no relative agreement....no time, should be present ; and it is equally impossible, that two relative agreements...two times, should be present at once ; or which is the same, it is impossible, that *one* relative agreement....*one* time, should be present *twice*. Therefore, there must eternally be a new relative agreement ; that is, a new present time. Therefore ; while the divine perception itself eternally remains immutably the same, its agreement with its object is eternally renewed. And in the Deity's eternally renewing the agreement of his own perception with its object, consists that agency, which is essentially implied in the vital energy of his own

Mind; in distinction from that agency, which consists in the exertion of his power, relative to the system of mutable existence.

Here it is worthy of special remark: That *TIME* never has, in any way whatever, the least dependence on any mutable existence: but, on the contrary, all mutable existence has an absolute dependence on time. Let it also be observed: That every *time*, when it becomes present, is infinitely extensive; that is, it extends, at once, through a whole immensity; and also, that the number of times, which is implied in a future eternity, and which remains to be present, is absolutely infinite.

From what has been said it is evident; That that the past is continually increasing: and consequently every finite portion of the future is diminished: while the present is always kept in a state of perfect equality; being neither increased nor diminished. And in order that you may have some view of eternity, and see what an inexhaustible fountain it is: Assume any finite number whatever, expressing the length of some duration, how great soever it may be: let it be millions of millions of ages. Then this amazing length of duration will, by divine agency, all be separated from the future, by being added to the past. And when this has been done; then another term of future duration of equal length will still remain to be separated, as before: and after that, another of the same length as the preceding: and so on forever. Thus the Deity is operating, and will eternally continue to operate, in adding the present time to the past, and transmitting time from the future to the present; and, on the present time, all the existence, that the whole universe contains, intirely depends. The unremitted agen-

cy of the Deity, in performing this endless series of operations, which has now been described, is exerted with resistless energy and infinite ease.

Here, then, is life and activity....here is perfection and happiness, inexpressibly and inconceivably great....Immensity, containing universal, absolute perfection; and an all comprehending Mind, perceiving, at one infallible, intuitive view, the vast and stupendous whole; and being incessantly employed in executing a series of operations, extending to every part of interminable duration! What an astonishing prospect....what an overwhelming scene, here presents itself to view, and demands the most profound attention of every serious, contemplative mind!

Let it not be said; let it not be once imagined, that this is nothing but mere speculation, in which *you* have no practical concern. You are already introduced into the vast system of things....placed in the centre of immensity; and arrested by the strong hand of eternity; from whose all-powerful grasp, you can never be disengaged. Strive, therefore, to admit into your inmost soul, for your own practical improvement, the poet's solemn reflection:

"The bell strikes one. We take no note of time,

"But from its loss: to give it, then, a tongue

"Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,

"I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,

"It is the knell of my departed hours:

"Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.

"It is the signal that demands dispatch:

"How much is to be done? My hopes and fears

"Start up alarm'd; and o'er life's narrow verge

"Look down.....On what? A fathomless abyss!

"A dread ETERNITY! how surely mine!

YOUNG.

It has already been stated : That a whole eternity, not in successive parts ; but the sum of all the parts of a whole eternity, in connexion with itself, constituting ONE relative agreement, has been present, and is now past. But yet it is still the case, that there is, even now, one relative agreement ; and this always will be the case, in every period of future duration. Therefore, from eternity there has been, there is now, and to eternity, there will be, ONE relative agreement, in connexion with the absolute PRESENT. And the absolute Present is, as we have said before, the infinite, immutable, and eternal I AM ; that is, the Deity himself....the all-perceiving, all-comprehending Mind. Therefore, there always has been, is now, and forever will be, a perfect agreement of divine perception with its correspondent object. And the object of divine perception is, as we have observed, complete, universal, unchangeable, absolute perfection ; constituting immensity itself.

Thus you may have some view, that is, an intellectual view, of the Living God ; that Keeper of Israel, who never “slumbers nor sleeps.” (Ps. cxxi. 4.) O what a rich treasure is here !....a treasure of infinitely greater magnitude, and more value, than what can ever be found any where in the whole system of created things ! How happy, then, must that soul be, who can truly say ; “Thou art my portion, O Lord.” (Ps. cxix. 57.)

Inconceivably powerful and active is that great and adorable Being, who, by his uncontrollable energy, causes a stream to incessantly flow, from a future eternity, into the ever-swelling ocean of the past. To what an unimaginable height will he raise those, who take the right side ! And to what a tremendous depth will he forever

sink those, who, when called to give up their final account, will be found in the opposite scale ! For those of the first class will have a boundless range in immensity ; still advancing forward through futurity, and rising by swift degrees, according to the continual enlargement of their capacities, to higher and higher degrees of happiness, in endless progression. But those of the other class, that is, all, who have finished their probationary state, without accepting, in the accepted time, the offers of salvation, will be absolutely confined to the past : and, as that is forever augmented, in one continued series of increasing terms, extending to infinity, they will be forever sinking deeper and deeper, in the dismal abyss of unutterable wo. This must inevitably be their final portion : for such is the fixed determination of the God of eternity ; and even infinite mercy itself can never reverse the unalterable decree.

We have now taken a general view of divine agency, considered as being that, which is essentially implied in the eternal vital energy of the Divine Mind ; by which the present agreement of *relative*, with *absolute* perfection is forever renewed. For the Deity is continually operating in adding the present time to the past ; and transmitting time, in endless succession, from the future to the present. By which operation, the finite terms of future duration, how large soever those terms may be, are continually exhausted, one after another ; the present, consisting in simple UNITY, is always kept in a state of perfect equality : never admitting any increase nor diminution. But the past, by the continual accession of new terms, will be growing larger and larger, till it has arrived to an infinite extent.

SECTION SECOND.

On Divine Agency; consisting in the exertion of Divine Power.

We shall now proceed to take a view of Divine Agency, considered as being that, which always presupposes a balance of power: which agency consists in the Deity's actually turning the scale; that is, in remitting *one* term of his twofold power, and retaining the *other*: and this is what we call, *exertion of divine power*. And this divine exertion is that, from which results the whole system of mutable existence, with all the changes, that attend it, in endless variety.

In the original state of things; that is, prior to the actual exertion of divine power, in the production of particular events; there was no necessity, that such events should ever take place. It is to be observed, however, that the want of previous necessity, relative to the taking place of particular events, does not imply the want of previous power. For though there never can be necessity without power, that is, possibility; yet there can be possibility without necessity. For there is, in reality, such a thing as a balance of power; that is, an equal possibility on both sides. And wherever there is a balance of power, there is the want of necessity. There was, in the original state of things, a universal balance of power, relative to the taking place of every possible particular event: there was, therefore, originally, the universal want of previous necessity, with regard to all such events. Consequently, with respect to any particular event whatever, that has taken place, in any past time; or ever will take place, in any future period; there was not, origin-

ally, any previous necessity of its ever taking place. The reason is because, as we have said, there was originally, respecting every such event, a universal balance of power. And since there is such a universal balance, implying a twofold possibility, it follows: That the Deity is the Supreme Lord of necessity; he has it under his absolute control; and therefore can introduce it whenever, and with regard to whatever, he pleases, respecting all events of a mutable nature, through the whole of his boundless dominion. In relation to any possible effect of a mutable nature, it is only for the Deity to speak; and it shall be done; to command, and it shall stand fast. (Psalm xxxiii. 9.)

Let it only once be admitted; and admitted it must be: That there is an original balance of power, relative to all possible events of a mutable nature; and that the Deity holds the balance, till the proper time arrives for him to turn the scale; then it will follow: That the agency of the Deity, according to the view, in which we are now considering it, universally consists in his actually turning the scale, by removing one term of the twofold possibility and retaining the other. And when the scale is thus turned; then, but not before, necessity is actually introduced. And the necessity, thus introduced, consists in that possibility, which is actually retained, while the other is removed.

In order to prevent any misapprehension, we will repeat, with a little variation in the form of expression, what has been said before. In respect to every event of a mutable nature, the Deity is originally invested with a twofold power. This twofold power, implying on each side an equal possibility, constitutes what we call, a *bal-*

ance of power. As long as the Deity holds this balance ; or, in other words ; as long as possibility remains in its original twofold state, there is no necessity ; that is, there is no necessity, previous to the scale's being actually turned. But when the Deity actually turns the saale ; that is, when he actually remits one of the two possibilities, while he retains the other ; then, but not before, necessity is introduced ; which necessity consists in that *one possibility*, which actually remains, when the other is removed.

And here it may be proper to just remark : That it is presumed, that no person, of any reflection or candour, can ever suppose, that, when the terms, "balance of power," "turning the scale," &c. are used, there is the least intention to give an intimation, That the twofold power, with which the Deity is originally invested, respecting every mutable event, is the same as a *material* balance ; or that his agency ; that is, the actual exertion of his power, is the same as turning a *material* scale. These terms, and others of the like kind, are used, not from strict necessity, but merely for the sake of convenience. For, entirely new terms might easily be invented for the purpose of expressing the same things ; but this would not be so convenient as to appropriate, to a particular use, those which have already been introduced into the language. And the liberty, which is thus taken, in the use of terms, literally denoting material substances, to express intellectual objects, the most awful and sublime, can never be attended with any ill consequence to the candid and judicious reader ; if he is always duly advertised by the writer, of the special appropriate sense, in which he uses the expressions, he actually employs to communicate his ideas. No person of an honest, serious turn of mind,

will be liable to be led into error, when, in the sacred scriptures, he reads, with that impartial attention which the solemn subjects demand: That God is a rock. That he hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. That in the last judgment, the books will be opened; and that, according to what will then be found therein written, every one will receive his final sentence. That the happy and the miserable will, in the future world, be separated by a great gulf fixed, so as to forever exclude the possibility of passing, from one side to the other. (Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Sam. xxii. 2. Isa. xl. 12. Rev. xx. 12. Luke xvi. 26.) A great variety of other instances, illustrative of the preceding remark, might be produced: but we shall not, at present, any farther pursue this philological digression.

From what has been stated, respecting the nature of divine agency, in the production of particular events in the system of mutable existence, in which statement it has been asserted: That this agency consists in the Deity's remitting one term, and retaining the other, of that twofold power, with which he is originally invested; it may, possibly, be inferred by some, who have not sufficiently attended to the subject: That the divine power, by the actual exertion of it, is really diminished; and therefore, that, by being continually exerted, it will be finally exhausted. But that such an inference as this, is nothing more than what is merely imaginary, will readily appear, if it is duly considered: That the divine power is absolutely infinite; being as boundless as eternity: it is, therefore, an inexhaustible fountain, from which the

largest streams may forever flow, and yet the original fountain still remain forever full. For when ten thousand times ten thousand ages, multiplied by millions of millions more, have been deducted from futurity, and the divine power has been continually exerted, through the whole of this inconceivable length of duration, neither eternity, nor the power of the God of eternity, will have suffered the least diminution. Then let saints rejoice.... let sinners tremble, before that Almighty Being who possesses, and who will forever possess, such adorable....such awful power.

And you, reader, whoever you are, must forever feel the inconceivably delightful, or inexpressibly dreadful, effects of this tremendous power. For you are, and necessarily must be, in a state of the most strict accountability to him who now sustains the balance, and will shortly turn the scale. Therefore, remember, that the crisis of all things, the most interesting, that can possibly engage your attention, will soon, very soon arrive. And O! it is a question of the most solemn importance....On which side, in that decisive moment, will *you* be found? The answer to this question will involve the answer, respecting the irreversible decree, that will then fix your final destiny: In consequence of which you will begin, and never cease, either to rise to heights of happiness, too great to be ever known or conceived, but only by actual enjoyment; or sink to depths of misery, utterly beyond the power of language to describe, or imagination, exerting its utmost strength and skill, to paint.

It is wonderful, surpassing all description, to think of the large extent of divine agency. It is this, which at first produced, and continually actuates, the whole system, in

all its various parts, in the material and mental world. It extends from every, even the minutest particle, too small to be the object of our senses, to those amazing masses of matter, of astonishing magnitude, and in numbers beyond calculation, which are incessantly revolving, with rapid motion, and regular order, in the infinitude of space. The divine agency also extends to all the sensations, ideas, and volitions of the *mind*: that immaterial, immortal principle, which, having once begun to exist, must unavoidably retain its existence and conscious identity, through the whole of a duration, which is never to end.

The divine hand, therefore, by the effects it produces, is at all times visible : presenting itself to our view, wherever we turn our eyes. It is to be plainly seen within and without : above, below, and on every side.

It is to be seen in the sun, that vast body of fire, which, for thousands of years, has been shining with a splendour too bright for the eye to meet, in a direct view ; and dispensing its light, heat, and vivifying influences to surrounding worlds, continually circulating around it : and particularly to this globe, allotted for the habitation of man.

It is to be seen in the rolling waves of the mighty ocean ; and on the surface of the earth ; whether clothed in a garment of the purest white, or dressed in living green.

It is to be seen in the regular succession of day and night ; and in all the variety of the different seasons.

It is to be seen in the element of fire ; by the astonishing motion of which the combustible substances, in

which it is kindled, are in a most wonderful manner, reduced to smoke and ashes.

It is to be seen, heard, and felt, in every wind that blows; whether it is the gentle breeze, that wafts the odours of the flowery field....thereby being the medium of conveying a pleasing sensation, and inspiring calmness and repose; or the awful, desolating tornado; which prostrates, to a level with the ground, the lofty trees of the forest....overturns the shelters, erected for cattle....sweeps away the habitations of men, and sinks, in the great deep, the ships, which before had been floating on its surface; burying, at once, thousands of human beings, in a watery grave.

The hand of the Almighty is to be seen, and his voice heard, in the clouds, that overspread the sky; in the fleecy snow, descending to clothe the ground, as it were, with a garment, to defend it from the rigour of the inclement season; in the drops of rain, falling in countless millions, to water the soil; in the darting lightning; the roaring thunder; and the rattling hail.

It is also, sometimes, to be seen, in some places, in the terrible volcano, pouring forth a vast torrent of liquid fire and brimstone; which, with relentless fury, involves whole towns and villages in one common ruin.

It is likewise to be seen in the tremendous earthquake; when the ground, suddenly cleaving asunder, opens a wide grave, and swallows up many thousands, in a moment; who all go "down alive into the pit."....never more to return to see the light of the present world.

The divine power and agency are every where displayed in the formation and growth of grass, grain, and vegetables of endless variety; together with all those num-

berless animals, which inhabit the waters ; creep or walk on the surface of the earth ; or fly in the air.

And, especially, is the continual exertion of divine power to be perceived in the various, complicated, and perpetual motions of that most curious and wonderful machine, which constitutes the human frame. It is to be perceived in all the motions of the beating heart, and the circulating blood ; and in the respiration of every breath. All these proclaim an ever present God, continually exerting his power. For it is he who, through all our waking and sleeping hours, causes the heart to beat and the blood to flow ; and “ in his hand is our breath :” (Dan. v. 23.) even that breath, on which depends the present union between the mortal body and the immortal mind....The immortal mind !....a most solemn expression ! an expression, the full import of which, it will require a whole eternity to unfold. In this internal, immaterial world, the divine agency is also manifested, in such a manner, and to such a degree, as justly demands the most serious reflection. Here is a course of successive operations, which, though but lately begun, yet is to be continued, in an endless series. Here the Deity, by the instrumentality of external objects, and other means, which answer his design in effecting his purposes, is continually exciting sensations and ideas, in such number and variety, as language is utterly incapable of expressing. And he is not only continually operating ; but he also performs his operations with irresistible energy. If you entertain any doubt of this ; then, for your own conviction, make the trial to stop the current of your thoughts ; bid the stream cease to flow.

Not only every sensation, and every thought ; but

also every *volition*, both common and special, is the effect of divine agency. But since volition is an event of a peculiar nature, being intirely distinct from all other events, either in the external or internal system ; therefore the Deity, who invariably conducts agreeably to the rules of perfect order, produces this event according to a peculiar law of divine operation. For he is not only Omnipotent, but also Omniscient ; and therefore, he is not only able to produce every possible event ; but he also sees and regards every thing as being exactly what it is. And as he is a Being of unchangeable rectitude ; therefore he will infallibly regulate all his conduct, in the production of events, just according to the real state of things. Or, which amounts to exactly the same thing ; he will, without the least deviation, in any instance whatever, always do as he sees fit ; that is, just as he pleases. And thus “ His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.” (Isa. xlvi. 11.)

In the production of every event, distinct from volition, in the universal system of mind and matter, the Deity always has a regard to something, whatever it may be, which is intirely distinct from that internal principle of consciousness, which we call, “ the mind.” But in the production of *volition*, which, as we have observed, is perfectly distinct from every other event (whether it consists in matter, motion, or perception) he always has a special regard to the particular state of THE MIND ITSELF. Hence it is, that since volition is an event of a peculiar nature, being perfectly distinct from all others, there is a peculiar law of divine operation, respecting the production of this event. And this being the case, we may always know, with certainty, what we have to de-

pend upon; in what way the Deity, in the administration of his moral government, will deal with us; and how he will fix our final and eternal destiny. Respecting the production of any volition, the Deity always has a special regard to the particular state of that *individual mind*, to which the volition, that is to be produced, peculiarly belongs. Every individual mind, therefore, will be answerable for its own conduct, just according to that particular state, in which it will be actually found; that is, just according to that particular side, whether right or wrong, which will be actually taken by the individual mind itself. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. xiv. 12.)

The Deity is invested with a twofold power, constituting what we call, "a balance of power," in respect to future events: and especially in respect to that event, of all others the most important, future volition. In consequence of this twofold power, with which the Deity is invested, *your individual mind*; that is, *you yourself*, considered as an individual conscious being, in distinction from all other beings and things, in the universal system, are now in a state of natural liberty....you are naturally free. And by that twofold power, with which the Deity is invested, you are enabled to take either side. While, at the same time, the Deity, who is now holding that balance of power, which implies the twofold possibility relative to your eternal state, is calling upon, directing, and commanding you to take the right side. If, therefore, deaf to his call....regardless of his direction, and disobedient to his command, you should be actually found on the **WRONG** side, at that time, which is to form the crisis, the awfully decisive moment, when that same Om-

nipotent hand, which now holds the balance, will turn the scale; then, according to this statement of the case, you may, even now, with certainty know what will be the final result. The scale will be so turned, as to fix you in a state of endless wo; but yet there will be no just cause for any complaint, That the scale has been turned the wrong way. The whole wrong, in this case, will be intirely imputable to you alone, on account of your taking the wrong side. And the conduct of the Deity, in so turning the scale, as to plunge you into that state of irretrievable ruin, a faint glimpse of which, even in distant prospect, is sufficient to fill the soul with horror, will be perfectly right. Because it will be agreeable to a law, which, in its eternal nature, is immutably holy, just, and good: even that law of divine operation, which has a peculiar respect to the agency of the Deity, relative to the production of volition. This is that law, for which the Deity has a supreme regard, in the administration of his moral government over finite free agents.

From what has been observed, it may be seen, that the divine agency extends to all effects, that are ever produced, volition itself not excepted; and that this universal agency of the Deity is no infringement of liberty. Therefore, to the Supreme "Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," all finite free agents are strictly accountable for all their moral conduct.

From the observations, that have now been made, on the nature of power and agency, it will be evident to all, who consider the subject, with proper attention, That there is a real distinction between the divine *power* and divine *agency*: that is, between the divine power itself, and the actual exertion of it. Particular effects never

take place merely in consequence of *power*, considered absolutely in itself; but all effects, that actually exist, are produced by the *exertion* of power.

The Deity has not, and never will have, any new power; he is, however, and always will be, making new *exertions* of that same power with which he has been from eternity originally invested. But notwithstanding his continually making new exertions, yet his power, being originally infinite, will never be exhausted, nor in the least degree diminished.

The Deity is originally invested, as we have said, with a twofold power, in respect to future events; and, among others, those two all-important events of endless happiness and endless misery. With respect to these two events, there is, in the original state of things, a balance of power. Neither of them, therefore, is originally fixed by any previous necessity; and neither of them will be fixed, till the Deity makes, with respect to them, an actual exertion of his power; that is, till he actually turns the scale. But when the scale is once actually turned, then one or the other of those two events will be accordingly fixed by a necessity, as lasting, and as strong, as the existence of the Deity.

In every case, in which there is a balance of power, with respect to future happiness and misery, there always is, previous to the scale's being actually turned, a right and a wrong side. And, in this case, that side, which relates to happiness, is always the right side; and the opposite to this, viz. that which relates to misery, is the wrong..... The reason is, because the one is an ultimate good, and the other an ultimate evil; and between these two there is an unalterable distinction.

The Deity, in relation to himself, is always necessarily on the side of truth and happiness ; and hence originates that divine law, by which, in his moral government, he absolutely requires, with infinite authority, all free agents to be on the *same* side ; and therefore, with the same infinite authority, he absolutely forbids their being on the opposite side ; viz. that of falsehood and misery. And that such a law as this, is, in the very nature of it, perfectly holy, just, and good, must appear with irresistible force, to all who consider the subject, with any degree of serious and impartial attention.

If you should now be disposed to inquire ; How you come to be a free agent, with respect to future happiness and misery ? The answer is : Because the Deity is now invested with a twofold power, relative to those two most interesting events ; by which twofold power of the Deity, since it has a special relation to you in particular, you are enabled to take either side ; that is, you are enabled to take hold of either term of that twofold power of the Deity, on which your individual happiness or misery, for eternity, now intirely depends : and therefore, you are now naturally free. You have a natural liberty to be happy or miserable forever. The Deity, at the same time, while he is holding this balance of power, which has a peculiar relation to your final state, through endless futurity, is continually directing you which side to take, and solemnly warning you against the dreadful consequence of your taking the opposite side. But though you are now in this general state of natural liberty, in consequence of which you can take either side : yet it must be remembered ; That it is already fixed, in general, by an unalterable decree ; That you shall take one side or

the other. Which side, in particular, you will actually take, is therefore, the only question, that now remains to be decided. Thus you may see what is your present situation. You are absolutely in the hands of God ; and yet in a state of liberty. This liberty results, as we have said, from the twofold power of the Deity, respecting your future and final state. If, hearkening to the voice of infallible wisdom and infinite benevolence, you take the right side ; then the scale will be turned in your favour, and consequently your happiness will be forever secured ; and by this change you will lose no liberty, but only that of being miserable. But if, trusting in falsehood, to which you are absolutely forbidden to pay any regard, you are at last found on the wrong side ; then the scale will be so turned, as to introduce you into a state of remediless misery ; by which you will be intirely deprived of all liberty of ever being happy. And the case being thus once decided, even the Deity, who is a being of invariable order and immutable truth, cannot reverse the decision ; the original balance can never be restored ; and the scale can never be turned the opposite way.

Having taken a view of the nature and extent of the divine agency, in general, and illustrated the doctrine by particular examples ; we should next proceed to the consideration of special divine agency, were it not, that this cannot be so well understood without having the divine economy of redemption brought into view ; when, therefore, we come to treat on that subject, the doctrine of special divine agency will then be considered.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE ORIGIN OF EVIL : INCLUDING A GENERAL VIEW OF
THE NATURE OF SIN ; THE MORAL LAW AND THE GOSPEL ;
THE DIVINE JUSTICE AND GOODNESS.

THERE is, in the original state of things, a possibility of infinite good and a possibility of infinite evil, relative to the mutable system. These two possibilities are, in their nature, original : they are uncreated, and have been from eternity. These two original possibilities are the foundation of two kinds of moral action ; one of which is denominated *right*, and the other *wrong*. The original possibility of evil implies no evil in itself ; neither is it the cause of evil. It is, indeed, the foundation, without which no evil could ever have existed ; but then it does not, in its original state, imply any kind of necessity of any evil's ever being actually introduced. The original principle of evil (by which we mean exactly the same as the possibility of evil) is always such, in its essential nature, as to render it intirely unfit and improper that finite free agents should, on any account whatever, have any connexion with it. All such connexion, therefore, is, in the very nature of it, absolutely wrong.... Hence originates the moral law ; by which all finite free agents are most strictly forbidden to have any connexion with the original principle of evil. This principle contains no good in itself, and it never can, in any way, nor on any account whatever, be the foundation, the cause, or the occasion of any good. This principle, in its original state, or, as it is in the hand of the Deity, is perfectly harmless ; but when finite agents, in direct violation of

the divine law, form a connexion with it; then it is of a most hurtful and injurious nature. For by such connexion falsehood is introduced into the mental system; and it is the nature of falsehood to operate in the production of pain or misery. And there are many sad instances, in which finite agents, by violating the moral law, in having a connexion with the original principle of evil, have for ever ruined themselves beyond all possibility of recovery; that is, they have formed such a connexion with the possibility of infinite evil, that the very nature of their case absolutely requires their being utterly and eternally excluded from all possibility of good.

The Deity, who is invested with Omnipotence, can hold in his hand, that balance of power, which implies a possibility of infinite good, on one side; and on the other, a possibility of infinite evil. This cannot, however, be the case with finite agents; for they cannot take *both* sides of the Deity's twofold power. If, therefore, they take the possibility of infinite evil; that is, if, in direct violation of the moral law, they form a connexion with the original principle of eternal death; then, by thus uniting with the grand adversary, they must necessarily, from the very nature of the case, have nothing but evil, without any possibility of good. For in this case, the Deity absolutely will, according to his own universal, immutable, and eternal plan of operation, remit, with respect to them, the possibility of all good; and consequently will for ever retain the possibility of all evil.

Hence we may see what is the foundation of the moral law, and wherein it consists; we may also see the foundation and the nature of sin; we may likewise see what is the foundation of the gospel as well as the law.

The law absolutely forbids all finite free agents forming any connexion with the original principle of evil ; and in the transgression of this law all sin or moral evil universally consists. The gospel requires all finite free agents to unite with the original principle of infinite good ; that is, to form an indissoluble connexion with the possibility of eternal life : so that there may be, with respect to them, the infallible security of all possible good ; and, at the same time, the absolute exclusion of the possibility of infinite evil. Hence the law and the gospel perfectly harmonize with each other. One absolutely forbids all connexion with the grand adversary ; that is, the original principle of eternal death ; the other requires a union with the glorious Mediator ; that is, the original principle of eternal life. And such is the universal, unalterable nature of these two original principles, that no finite agent can ever agree with them both ; therefore, the taking of one of them always implies the absolute exclusion of the other. That is ; where any finite agent has once made an actual agreement with the principle of eternal death, or with the principle of eternal life ; then the agreement, thus made, can never be dissolved ; and no agreement can ever be formed on the opposite side..... It is, therefore, by a union with the Mediator, that is, the original principle of eternal life, and by such a union alone, that any finite free agent can ever be effectually secured from the danger of being forever ruined by the adversary, that is, the original principle of eternal death. For should a person, for any length of time, conduct in such a manner as not to admit falsehood, in any degree, and therefore, not be guilty of any transgression of the moral law ; then, in this case, he would, for the time being, that is, as long as he continued to be intirely

free from transgression, be in a state of perfect exemption from all actual evil ; that is, all pain or misery..... Merely his being in a state of innocence, however, though it would, during the time of his being innocent, actually exempt him from present evil ; yet it would not, in any measure, insure his future enjoyment of good ; nor be any security against his falling into a state of future evil. In order, therefore, that all good may be effectually secured, and the danger of all evil intirely removed, there must be something perfectly distinct from mere innocence. For it is by the exercise of faith in the glorious Mediator, and by that alone, that infinite good can be *secured*, and the danger of infinite evil *avoided*.

Hence you may see what is the nature of the moral law, strictly so called. Let us inquire, What the law, by itself, without bringing a Mediator into view, can do?.... And here two cases are to be considered : one is, that of your being perfectly innocent ; and the other is, that of your being a transgressor of the law.

1. We will suppose, that you are perfectly innocent : or that you are intirely free from sin. Then the inquiry is : What can the law do for you, in this case ?

The answer is ; It can preserve you from present evil. And so much, not only according to infinite goodness, but also according to impartial justice, it will certainly do. And should you continue in a state of innocence, for ever so great a length of time, you will, through the whole of the time, be preserved from all actual evil. So much the law can do, and it never can do any more. For it never can, notwithstanding your perfect innocence, give you any security of future good ; nor free you, in the least, from the danger of future evil. The reason is ; because there is, in the original state of things, not only a possi-

bility of infinite good ; but also a possibility of infinite evil. And as long as the possibility of evil is not removed ; but still remains the same as it was in its original state, the good will thereby be rendered insecure ; and therefore, from the very nature of the case, you will be left exposed to the evil. But notwithstanding your being in a state, in which there is a possibility of evil ; yet as long as you continue to be perfectly innocent, the law, which is holy, just, and good, will intirely protect you against all actual evil ; and this as we have said, is all that the law can do. For you never can have any security of the infinite good ; nor any exemption from the danger of the infinite evil, which is before you, till the possibility of the infinite evil is actually removed. But this possibility can never be removed, merely by your conformity to the law ; even though you are, according to the present statement of your case, perfectly free from all transgression. For the security of good can never be introduced, nor the possibility of evil removed, but only by the effectual exercise of faith in the Mediator.

2. We will now change the supposition, so as to make it coincide with the real fact ; which is ; That you are a transgressor of the law. Then it is evident, that the law cannot do any thing more for you, on the favourable side, in this case, than in the other. For if perfect innocence cannot introduce the security of good ; then it is certain, that this never can be done by transgression. There is, however, a very remarkable difference between the two cases, respecting what the law can do, according to what justice requires, and according to what goodness admits to be done ; for goodness and justice can never disagree. In the first case, you was supposed to be in a

state of innocence. Let you continue, then, in that state ever so long ; whether it be ten, or ten thousand years ; or any other term of longer duration ; the law will, through the whole of the time of your thus continuing to be perfectly free from transgression, require your protection from all actual evil ; though the possibility of evil will still remain ; and therefore the security of good will not be introduced. For the possibility of evil and the security of good being directly inconsistent with each other, never can both be actually present at one and the same time. Therefore, as long as one continues to be present, the other will continue to be future. Consequently, though your innocence, as long as it remains, will guard you against all actual evil ; yet it will not, let it continue ever so long, remove the possibility of evil ; and therefore will not afford you any security of good. But in the second case, in which you are supposed, according to what has already become an incontestable fact, to be a transgressor of the law ; you must, according to the demands of the law, be chastised with temporal evil, in the present world ; while at the same time, you are threatened with eternal evil, in the world to come.

Now since you have become a transgressor of the law ; and consequently evil has already actually begun to take place ; it may be inquired : Why justice does not require your being immediately introduced into a state of infinite evil ; that is, eternal misery ? We answer : The reason is, because you have not yet filled up the measure of your iniquity. Sin, the disease of your soul, though it has already begun to operate, and is continually acquiring new strength, yet has not come to a crisis. Therefore the infinite good, on which all your happiness

intirely depends, is not yet actually lost. Consequently, there still remains a possibility of its being effectually secured ; or, which is the same, there is now a Mediator. On this account, therefore, though you are a transgressor of the law ; yet infinite goodness keeps you from immediately falling into a state of remediless ruin. But, persist in a course of transgression, only for a little time longer, without exercising faith in the Mediator, and then the awful crisis....the irreversibly decisive moment, will shortly arrive, respecting which it is said ; “ Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.” (Jam. i. 15.) Then the infinite good will, in respect to you, be irrecoverably lost ; and consequently, in respect to you, there will then be no Mediator....no Redeemer....no Saviour. And this being the case, eternal Justice will, not arbitrarily, but from strict necessity, absolutely demand the immediate execution, in its fullest extent, of that tremendous sentence, which had been before conditionally denounced, as a kind warning to excite you “ to flee from the wrath to come.” And what impartial justice inflexibly requires, even infinite goodness can never contradict.

Thus your transgression of the law, remaining unpardoned, and continuing to operate, till it has actually formed a crisis, and reached its final result, in the production of death, will leave you to eternally verify, by your own experience, the solemn truth : “ The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law.” (1 Cor. xv. 56.)

From the observations that have been made, you may learn what the law, strictly considered, can do, and what justice requires. If you are perfectly innocent, you will, as long as you thus remain, be intirely protected from all

actual evil, consisting in pain or misery. But the *possibility* of evil not being removed, you will not have any security of the present good which you enjoy ; and therefore will not be freed from the danger of the introduction of future evil.

If you are a transgressor of the law, and, without the exercise of faith in the Mediator, pursue, for a while, a course of transgression, till you have filled up the measure of your iniquity ; then all good in the universal system, will, to you, be intirely and eternally lost. And being thus wholly forsaken, and cast off, by infinite goodness, nothing will remain, that can possibly protect you against evil ; consequently, the divine law and justice will necessarily require your being delivered over to all evil, and unalterably fixed in a state, where “ the wrath of God must forever come upon you to the uttermost.” (1 Thess. ii. 16.)

The whole that the law, taken in a strict sense, requires of moral agents, may be summed up in the following prohibitory command : Absolutely avoid all argeement or connexion with the possibility of evil. The original principle of evil is (in the use of figurative language) the forbidden tree, the fruit of which can never be tasted, without transgressing the moral law ; and this law is of such a nature, that it cannot be transgressed with impunity. The reason, why there is a law, which absolutely prohibits all finite free agents from having any connexion with the original principle of evil, is, because it is the nature of such connexion to introduce falsehood, which, whenever it has taken intire possession of the mental system, is perfectly destructive of all good, and introductory to all evil. When falsehood, having once entered the

mind, has obtained a complete dominion over any person (which is the case with regard to every one, who is arrested by temporal death, previous to his having actually been the subject of the effectual renovating influences of the divine Spirit) it does, in respect to that person, intirely destroy the possibility of all good : even all that infinite good, which is implied in the blessed nature and glorious perfections of the Deity. And, by destroying the possibility of all good, it introduces a strict and absolute necessity of all evil. And since such is the nature of sin ; consisting in forming a connexion with the original principle of evil ; or which, when metaphorically expressed, is the same ; eating the fruit of the forbidden tree ; we never have any reason to hesitate a moment, in calling it an infinite evil. The infinite evil of sin consists in its nature ; which is, as we have just observed, to destroy the possibility of all good, and therefore introduce the necessity of all evil. And since sin is an infinite evil ; therefore the law, which absolutely forbids its being introduced into the system, is an infinitely good law.

Having observed : That the whole, which the law, taken in a strict sense, requires of moral agents, is comprehended in one prohibitory command, which is this : Absolutely avoid all agreement or connexion with the possibility of evil ; we shall now proceed to observe ; That the whole, which is required by the gospel, in distinction from the law, is contained in one positive command ; viz. Make an agreement with the possibility of eternal life ; or, which is the same ; Take hold of the divine strength, that you may make peace with God. (Isa xxvii. 5.)

The law, if you yield a perfect and perpetual obedience to it, will guard you against the actual introduction of evil ; but it never can free you from the danger of losing the good, which you actually enjoy ; and therefore, it can never give you any title to eternal life. But the law, if you are a transgressor of it, and, without paying any effectual regard to the gospel, persist in a course of transgression, till you have filled up the measure of your iniquity, can, and in this case, certainly will, introduce you into a state of eternal death. But it is the peculiar glory of the gospel, there being a cordial compliance with its demand, to save from all danger of eternal death, and give a sure and never-failing title to eternal life. The law and the gospel perfectly harmonize. Comply with the terms of the gospel ; and the law, notwithstanding your having previously been a transgressor of it, will be completely satisfied. Be on the side of infinite goodness ; and impartial justice will intirely acquiesce. In this case, you will learn, by happy experience, the joyful truth ; “ Mercy and truth are met together ; righteousness and peace have embraced each other.” (Psal. lxxxv. 10.) It must, however, be remembered ; That whatever you have to do with the gospel, must be speedily done ; or it will soon be for ever too late. For sin, a most deadly disease, having already infected your soul, is constantly acquiring new strength ; and therefore, unless it is prevented by the seasonable application of an effectual remedy, will shortly bring on that terrible crisis, when “ the Lord will separate you unto evil, according to all the curses that are written in the book of the law.” (Deut. xxix. 21.) And in this case, the conciliatory goodness of the gospel never will, and never can, save you from the avenging

justice of the law. It is, indeed, true ; That if you will embrace the gospel, while it can be embraced ; then the law will rest perfectly satisfied with your having, as, in this case, you certainly will have, an irrevocable title to the possession of all good ; even that good, in the enjoyment of which, the whole happiness of the Deity intirely consists. But if you will not, now in this accepted time....this day of salvation, improve the only opportunity, that ever can be given for that purpose ; then the law will inflexibly demand your being eternally separated unto all evil ; from which inexpressibly dreadful state, neither the law, nor the gospel....neither justice, nor mercy, will ever, through endless duration, afford you any hope, or any possibility of deliverance.

From the preceding observations, it is evident ; That we must look to the glorious gospel, in order to behold the greatest possible display of the divine perfections..... For by the gospel, which always includes the law, the Deity can display *both* his goodness and his justice. But, by the law, exclusive of the gospel ; in the case of those, who have transgressed the law, and rejected the gospel, till they have been finally separated from all good, and consigned over to all evil ; the Deity can only make a display of *justice* without *mercy*. “ Therefore, he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.” (Isa. xxvii. 11.)

What good end, then, you will ask, can be ultimately answered by such transgression of the law, as terminates in the final perdition of the transgressor ? We answer : It is the universal nature of all such transgression, to relate only to infinite evil, consisting in the eternal loss of all good ; even the absolute loss of the Deity himself.

considered as a felicitating being; and therefore it never can answer any *good end*.

But though it should be granted, that such transgression does, in the very nature of it, relate to the intire loss of all good, in respect to the *transgressor*; yet may it not be made the means of securing the good of *others*? In answer to this, it must be observed: That it is not by any *transgression* of the *law*; but by a *compliance* with the *gospel*; that *any good* whatever, in respect to finite beings, ever can, in any measure, be *secured*. And since, in this way, and this alone, all possible good can be effectually secured, therefore, there is no other possible way, in which it ever can receive the least degree of additional security. From a view of what has been observed, you may, perhaps, be ready to say: That from the consideration, that sin is of such a nature, as to render it utterly incapable of being the cause, or occasion, either directly, or indirectly, of securing any good; but that it is, on the contrary, the only possible way, in which any evil, implying the loss of good, can ever be introduced; it seems to follow as a consequence: That it would be the greatest honour to the character of the supreme Governor of the moral system, if there was a law enforced by infinite authority, absolutely prohibiting, in all cases whatever, the existence of sin. It is true; this consequence does, indeed, most certainly follow, from a consideration of the nature of sin. And accordingly, there actually *is* such a law; which law, therefore, from the very nature of it, is now, and for ever will be, perfectly holy, just, and good. This may lead you to repeat the inquiry: If sin relates only to evil, and is of such a nature as to render it absolutely incapable of be-

ing, in any way whatever, even the occasion of good ; then why did not the Deity prevent its actually ever coming into existence ? Was this owing to an original want of power ? Certainly it was not ; but right the reverse. The Deity, so far from *wanting* any power, on either side, was originally invested with a *twofold* power ; implying a possibility, on one side, of securing infinite good ; and a possibility, on the other, of introducing infinite evil. And this being the case, it was, in the highest degree, fit and proper that there should be a law, relative to moral agents, absolutely prohibiting their being on that side, which implies a possibility of evil. Had this law been universally observed ; then no falsehood, nor evil of any kind, would ever have been introduced ; and therefore, no way would have been opened for the actual loss of any good. Consequently ; if sin had never taken place ; then there would have been all the possible good, which there is now, and no loss of any possible good, in any case whatever ; and consequently, there would have been a foundation for a display of both justice and goodness. But since sin, having made its entrance into the world, has begun and finished its work, in the final destruction of vast numbers ; therefore, in respect to all of this description, the foundation for the display of goodness is intirely removed ; and consequently, there can be no display, but only that of *justice* without *mercy*.

Should you inquire : Why the Deity, who from the beginning, had a most perfect knowledge of every event, with all its consequences did not so order things, at first, that sin should never take place ; if he certainly knew, that something would be lost, in respect to the sinner ; and nothing gained, in any respect, by the actual intro-

duction of sin? You must be reminded, that your inquiry, stated in other terms of the same import will be this: Why did not the Deity originally make the universal uncreated system different from what it actually was, in its original state? Why did he at first admit that twofold power relative to good and evil, with which he was originally invested? Why did he not originally remove all original possibility of evil, retaining only the possibility of good, and thus for ever prevent the actual existence of sin and misery? Why did he sustain the character of the "one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy?" (Jam. 4. 12.)

Since there is, in the original state of things, a twofold power; viz. a power, on one side, implying a possibility of good, and an equal power, on the opposite side, implying a possibility of evil: hence originate two universal laws; which, for the sake of distinction, may be denominated: The moral law; and the law of divine operation: the first, having a peculiar relation to the conduct of finite beings; and the other to the conduct of the Deity. The moral law is that, whereby all finite free agents are absolutely prohibited from taking that side, which implies a possibility of evil; and the law of divine operation is that, according to which, the supreme Legislator regulates, without the least deviation, in any instance whatever, his own conduct, in retaining one term of his twofold power, and removing the other, just according as the moral law is obeyed or transgressed.

Whenever we speak of the moral conduct of any free agent, we always have reference to future time; for it is only in respect to future time, that the Deity is invested with a twofold power. If no finite free agent had ever

taken that side of the twofold power of the Deity, which implies a possibility of evil ; which might and ought to have been the case, because the moral law absolutely required it ; then sin and misery would never have taken place. For there would have been no fitness, arising from any consideration whatever, in its being introduced ; because neither the moral law, nor the law of divine operation would have required its introduction. And since, according to the present statement, there would not have been, on any account whatever, any fitness rendering it proper, that there ever should be any such thing, as the actual existence of sin and misery ; therefore the Deity never would have seen fit, that any sin or misery should ever actually exist. And in this case it might, with the strictest propriety, not only have been said : That the Deity could have prevented the existence of all sin and misery....if he had seen fit....but also ; That he had seen fit to prevent it ; and therefore, that he had actually prevented it. For with him it is a universal, immutable, and eternal rule, always to do just as he sees fit ; and never, in any instance whatever ; to do any thing that he does not see fit to do. But the true statement of the real fact is directly the reverse of the case, which has been supposed. For finite free agents have, in direct violation of the moral law, actually taken that side of the twofold power of the Deity, which implies a possibility of evil. Therefore the Deity, in perfect conformity to the law of divine operation, has actually done that, which, had there been no transgression of the moral law, he never would have seen fit to have done....he has remitted the possibility of good, and retained the possibility of evil : whereas if sin had never taken place, he never would, in any case what-

ever, have remitted, that is removed, the possibility of good ; but he would have retained ALL possibility of good ; therefore, he would have retained *that* possibility of good, which, in respect to some individuals, is now eternally removed, never to be restored again. For it is universally the case : That whenever the Deity retains one term of his twofold power, and removes the other ; then that one, which is actually retained, which before was mere possibility, becomes NECESSITY. But there never is any such thing as *necessity*, as long as there is, on each side, an equal possibility. And it is worthy of special observation ; That there never was, originally, in any case whatever, any possibility of EVIL, on one side, without an equal possibility of GOOD, on the opposite side.

Hence it is evident ; That there was no original necessity, that sin should ever have been actually introduced. Its introduction was not originally required by the Deity ; nor by any of his glorious perfections. It was not originally required by his knowledge ; nor his power ; nor his goodness ; nor his justice. It was not originally required by any law whatever ; neither the moral law ; nor the law of divine operation. It was not required to promote or secure any good ; neither that of the sinner, nor of any other being, that ever has existed, or ever will exist, in the universal system.

You will say then : If evil is altogether bad, in every view, that can possibly be taken of it ; why did not the Deity prevent its ever taking place ; for he could have done it with infinite ease, if he had seen fit ? It is, indeed, most certainly true : That the Deity could have prevented all evil, if he had seen fit ; but though this is true,

yet it is nothing to the present purpose. The real fact is, that the Deity, by being originally invested with a twofold power, did always prevent all evil, till the very time, when some finite free agent actually took that side of the twofold power, which implied a possibility of evil. And when that time actually arrived; then the Deity saw fit to do that, which he never would otherwise have seen fit to have done. For that was the very time for him, according to his own universal law of divine operation, to exert that twofold power, with which he had been eternally invested, by retaining that term, which implied a possibility of evil, and remitting the other term. It was at that time, therefore, that the necessity of evil was first introduced. For, previous to that, there always was a perfect balance of power, relative to good and evil. It is in vain, therefore, to say: That the Deity could have prevented all evil, *if he had seen fit*; for though this, in the conditional form, in which it is stated, is certainly true: yet the absolute truth of the case is: That the Deity did *not see fit* to prevent evil, any longer, than till the finite free agent had actually taken the prohibited side of his twofold power.

But if the Deity from eternity foresaw, that the existence of evil never could, in any way whatever, be of any advantage to himself, nor any other being, that should ever exist; then why did he not originally, that is, from eternity, so order the state of things, as to render it impossible, that evil should ever be actually introduced?

With regard to the first part of this inquiry; it is readily admitted to be a certain truth; That the Deity did, from eternity, actually know, that the existence of evil never could, in any way whatever, be of the least advan-

tage to himself, nor any other being, that should ever exist. And hence originated his perfectly holy, just and good law, sanctioning, with infinite authority, an absolute prohibition against the actual introduction of evil, in any case, or on any account whatever. And with regard to the other part of the inquiry; Why the Deity did not originally, that is, from eternity, so order the state of things, as to render it impossible, that evil should ever be actually introduced? nothing more is required, as an answer to it, than only to state the inquiry itself, in a different form: Why did not the Deity, who was originally, that is, from eternity, invested with a twofold power, implying a possibility of good, and a possibility of evil, in respect to the system of mutable existence, originally so order the state of things, as to have *ONLY* a power implying a possibility of *good*, without *ANY* possibility of *evil*? That is, why did he not *ORIGINALLY*, that is, from eternity, so order the state of things, as *not* to be *actually invested* with *all* that power, which he did *ORIGINALLY*, that is, from eternity, *ACTUALLY POSSESS*? But, has not the Deity, you will ask, a supreme regard for the highest *GOOD* of the system? He most certainly has..... And for this *very reason*, there is a glorious law, stamped with the character of infinite benevolence, absolutely *prohibiting* every free agent from taking that side, which implies *A POSSIBILITY OF EVIL*. Is not the Deity originally invested with a power, in consequence of which he can remove all possibility of evil, and thus effectually prevent any evil from ever being introduced? He certainly is. If, then, evil is of such nature, that it *NEVER CAN* be attended with any good consequence, neither direct nor occasional; why does not the Deity, in all cases,

remove the possibility of evil ; and thus effectually prevent its ever having any actual existence ? The reason is, because it is inconsistent with his universal plan, for him to do any thing before the proper time for his doing it, actually arrives. But there are some cases, in which finite free agents have, directly contrary to the divine command, formed such an agreement with the possibility of evil, as to render it inconsistent for the Deity, according to his own universal plan of operation, ever to remove it. For this reason, therefore, he has, in some particular instances, remitted the possibility of all good, and retained the possibility of all evil. For when any finite agent actually takes that side of the Deity's twofold power, which implies a possibility of evil ; then, in this case, he always sees fit to retain the possibility of evil, and remit the possibility of good ; whereby that, which, before, was nothing but the mere *possibility*, becomes the actual *necessity* of evil. And thus, evil itself, with all its dreadful consequences, is introduced.

When any finite agent actually takes that term of the Deity's twofold power, which implies a possibility of evil : Why does the supreme, universal Agent continue to retain the same term, and cease to retain the other ?

The universal reason is ; Because his conduct in thus doing, is perfectly agreeable to that irreversible law of divine operation, which he is inflexibly determined for ever to maintain inviolate, even though it should be at the expense of the eternal misery of the transgressor of the moral law.

What if no finite agent had ever taken, or ever should take, the interdicted term of the Deity's twofold power ?

Or, in other words ; What if the moral law never had been, and never should be, transgressed ?

In this case ; the Deity would for ever maintain inviolate, his own universal law of divine operation, by always retaining the possibility of good. And since the possibility of all good, in respect to every perceptive being, through the whole of the universal system, would be retained, in the hand of the Deity ; therefore, no evil ever would be introduced, and no good would ever be lost. And all this would be perfectly agreeable to the irreversible law....the universal plan of divine operation. On the supposition, therefore, of the moral law's never having been transgressed, in time past, and of its never being transgressed in future ; there is a foundation for the full enjoyment of all good, that there could possibly have been on the opposite supposition ; and this, also, without any evil ; and likewise all in perfect agreement with the universal plan of divine operation.

Hence it follows : That evil never has been, and never can be, in any possible view of it, of the smallest advantage to any being whatever, in the whole of Jehovah's dominion ; in time or eternity. And not only so ; but, in respect to every persevering transgressor of the law, and final despiser of the gospel, it will be infinitely worse than nothing. Such is the nature of the Deity, and all his glorious perfections, that there was no original necessity of any evil ; for, in the original state of things, there was no possibility of any evil, without an equal possibility of good. Therefore, it was not originally required, on any account whatever, that evil, of any kind, should ever exist. Such is the infinite excellence of the divine character, that it was, in the original state of things, per-

fectly consistent with the moral law, and with the universal plan of divine operation, that no evil, in any part of immensity, nor any period of eternity, should ever be introduced into actual existence. And even now, it would be perfectly consistent with the universal plan of divine operation, and with the greatest possible good of the whole system, that no evil should ever exist, if the moral law had never been transgressed. But since directly the reverse of this is the real fact; since the moral law, though there was no original necessity of transgressing it, yet has been actually transgressed; it has, therefore, according to the universal plan of divine operation, *now* become unalterably necessary, that evil should actually exist; and in some cases, that is, in all cases, in which there has been a transgression of the law, and a final rejection of the gospel, that it should continue to exist through endless duration. Too much, therefore, never can be said nor conceived, in praise of that most excellent and infinitely benevolent law, by which the first entrance of evil into the system was absolutely forbidden.

Let it be particularly observed, and always kept in view; That whenever we speak of there being, in the original state of things, a twofold power, implying a possibility of good, on one side, and an equal possibility of evil, on the other; and thus constituting a balance of power; we always have reference to that, which has a peculiar relation to the system of *mutable* existence, of which all finite beings, who are capable of happiness or misery, compose a part. For the Deity, in respect to himself, is invested only with a power, implying a possibility of good, without any possibility of evil. But in respect to finite beings, he is originally invested with a twofold power, im-

plying, on each side, an equal possibility, respectively relating to good and evil. And since there was originally in the hand of the supreme Agent, a perfect balance of power, equally relating, on each side respectively, to good and evil; therefore from the infinitely benevolent regard, which he eternally had to the greatest possible good of the whole system of finite beings, he instituted for them a most excellent and glorious law; containing an absolute prohibition against their taking, on any account whatever, that term of his twofold power, which implied a possibility of evil. And this law, being in its own nature, essentially holy, just, and good, was originally instituted by the Deity for the express purpose, that he might, in the prosecution of his universal plan of divine operation, always consistently retain, for the benefit of those, for whom the law was originally appointed, the possibility of good; and thus for ever prevent, throughout the whole system, in time, and for eternity, the actual existence of all evil. But since this law has been violated by finite beings; therefore the conduct of the Deity, with respect to them, in the execution of his own plan of divine operation, has been directly opposite, to what it would have been in the opposite case. *That* evil, respecting which there was, in the original state of things, only a mere possibility, without any necessity, has now become actually necessary. And, in some instances, it is, from the very nature of the case, now unavoidably required, that the evil, which has already begun, should never cease; but that it should always continue, in a progressive state of increasing magnitude, through endless duration. This evil, though it has, in certain cases, now become unalterably necessary, yet might all have been prevented, in perfect consistency with the original plan of divine operation;

and it would all have been prevented, had the moral law never been violated.

For such is the universal nature of the plan of divine operation, that it absolutely requires, on one hand, that no evil should ever exist, without an actual transgression of the moral law; and on the other, that every transgression should be attended, not with a good, but with an evil consequence. Hence all, without exception, to whom the moral law actually extends, are in a state of the most strict accountability to the supreme Lawgiver; from which state it is impossible, that they should ever be disengaged. Utterly vain, therefore, are all complaints against *his* conduct, as being too rigorous or severe. For he is inflexibly determined to invariably prosecute, in its fullest extent, his own universal plan of divine operation; whatever may be the consequence, whether good or evil, to finite beings. “He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?” “Remember this,” saith the Lord, “and show yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the secret things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me: declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done: saying, My council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” This “is the same God, who worketh all in all.” And “who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”.... “Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them who fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off.” For he “will render to every man ac-

according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." (Dan. iv. 35. Isa. xlvi. 8, 9, 10. 1 Cor. xii. 6. Eph. i. 11. Rom. xi. 22. ii. 6....10.)

But after all that has been observed, respecting the nature and origin of evil; perhaps you may be disposed to repeat the inquiry once more, which has already so often been made: If, from the moral law's being violated, no advantage can accrue, in any possible way, to any being in the universal system, neither at present, nor in any future period of duration: then why did the Omnipotent Governor of all worlds, who from eternity had an infinitely comprehensive view of all possible good and evil, ever permit such a thing as an actual violation of the moral law?

Respecting what relates to this inquiry, you must be reminded: That a *possibility* of evil always implies an original *possibility*, though not any original *necessity*, of a violation of the moral law. Your inquiry, therefore, stated in a different form, is this: Why did the Deity ever permit such a thing as the possibility of evil? Or, in other terms, involving the same inquiry: Why did the Deity permit himself to be originally invested with all that power, which, in the original state of things, he actually possessed: that is, a twofold power, implying, on each

side respectively, an equal possibility of good and evil? But had not the Deity, perhaps you will say, an original power, to remove the possibility of evil? We answer: That he always had such a power, *previous* to the *time*, when the moral law was actually transgressed: but when *that time* arrived, it then became absolutely necessary for him, according to his own universal plan of operation, to remit the possibility of good and retain the possibility of evil. All the evil, therefore, that is ever introduced by transgression, is always justly chargeable wholly to the account of the transgressor; who, by his own act, in taking, without any previous necessity, that side, the taking of which had been strictly forbidden by the moral law, renders it absolutely fit and proper for the supreme Legislator to conduct in a manner directly opposite, to what he would have conducted, in the opposite case; that is, in case there had been no transgression: for it would then have been perfectly consistent with the universal plan of divine operation, that no evil should ever have existed. The reason is: because the universal plan of divine operation never would have required any transgression of the moral law; and it never would, without such transgression, have admitted the actual existence of any evil. In that case, therefore, all evil would have been prevented; and the possibility of all good might, in perfect consistency with the universal plan of divine operation, have been forever retained. And thus all finite beings, in the whole system, might always have had a view, to the utmost extent of their ever growing capacities, of the bright side of the picture, still shining brighter and brighter, through the endless ages of eternity. But the melancholy case, in regard to vast numbers, even

thousands and millions, is *now* directly the reverse of what it *might* have been. That possibility of all good, which, had there never been any transgression of the moral law, the Deity, in perfect conformity to his own universal plan of operation, *might*, and actually *would*, have retained for them, as the foundation of their eternal happiness, is now for ever lost. In respect to them, therefore, the glorious Sun of the universe, whose light is infinitely more valuable than ten thousand times ten thousand worlds, is now, and will for ever continue to be, totally eclipsed; leaving them in all the horrors of the most dismal darkness, woe and misery. The time was when their complete happiness would have been perfectly consistent with the universal plan of the Deity, and with the greatest possible happiness of all other beings; but *that time* is now past, never more to return. For transgression, having already finished its work, has involved them in final and irrecoverable ruin. They do not now merely know, by speculation, but actually feel, by dreadful experience, the awful import of that solemn truth, of which the apostle has made a declaration: "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (Jam. i. 15.)

It has been observed, That, in respect to the Deity, there is no power but only what implies a possibility of good, without any possibility of evil; *his* happiness, therefore, is immutably and eternally secure. It is, in the very nature of things, absolutely impossible for him ever to do, or suffer, any evil. He never can be a transgressor, nor require the transgression, of the moral law; which was originally instituted solely for the benefit of finite beings, in order, that by their strict observance of it, he might, in perfect consistency with his own universal plan of operation, for ever retain, for them, the

possibility of all good ; and thus prevent all evil from ever having any actual existence. Again ; the Deity never will, and never can, violate the law of divine operation....that universal plan, in perfect conformity to which he invariably regulates his own conduct, in the disposal of all events, which result from the exertion of his power ; “ and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ; ” in which he is infinitely above the control of all created beings ; and therefore “ his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure.”

In respect to the Deity ; there is, as we have just observed, no power, but only what implies a possibility of all good, without any possibility of evil ; and, therefore, in respect to him, the *possibility* of good is universally the same as absolute *necessity*. But in respect to finite beings, the case is intirely different. For in respect to them, the Deity is originally invested with a twofold power, implying an equal possibility, on each side respectively, of good and evil ; and this constitutes a perfect balance of power. And in order that evil might never actually take effect, an infinitely good and benevolent law was instituted for the peculiar benefit of finite beings : containing an absolute prohibition against their ever being found on that side of the balance, which implies a possibility of evil. And the Deity expressly enjoined this prohibition on all finite beings, for whom the moral law was originally ordained, that he might always retain for them the possibility of good, in perfect consistency with his universal plan, relative to the exercise of his own power, according to his irreversible law of operation ; and thus for ever preserve the greatest harmony and happiness through the whole system of mutable and immutable existence.

Such was the original system of things : or in figura-

tive language, such was the garden of Eden, in its primitive state : such was that beautiful vineyard, in a very fruitful hill, which the Lord planted with the choicest vine. And now he gives a solemn challenge to all beings in the universe to show, if it can be shown, what could have been done more to his vineyard, that he has not done in it. Therefore it might have been reasonably expected, that it should produce genuine grapes ; but alas ! the sad reverse of this is true.

“ Now I will sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved concerning his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine press therein ; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it ? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes ? And now go to ; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard : I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up ; and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it waste ; it shall not be pruned nor digged ; but there shall come up briers and thorns : I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.” (Isa. v. 1....6.)

All things, in their original state, were in the best possible order ; being so arranged, that, all evil and misery might, in perfect consistency with the universal plan of divine operation, have been for ever excluded : and so that the endless variety of changes, which were to take

place, in the infinitely long series of successive times, that a whole eternity contains, might have been all on the side of good and happiness. In which case there might have been displays of the divine goodness, as well as justice, to the utmost extent of their original possibility. But the case is now, in some respects, essentially altered : for transgression of the moral law has, in some cases, eternally cut off that display of divine goodness, which the Deity, according to his original plan, might consistently have made, if no transgression had ever existed. Sin has, without any previous necessity, actually taken place ; and has not only begun to operate ; but also has, in vast numbers of instances, completely finished its work, in the final ruin of the sinner ; and in all such cases, the *possibility* of all good is for ever lost, and the actual existence of all evil is confirmed by an unalterable *necessity* : therefore it has now become absolutely inconsistent for the Deity ever to make such a display of his GOODNESS, as, according to THE ORIGINAL STATE OF THINGS, he might consistently have made. “How is the gold become dim ! how is the most fine gold changed ! (Lam. iv. 1.) There was (as we have just been observing) in the original state of things, a complete foundation for a universal display of the divine goodness to all finite free agents, without the actual existence of any natural or moral evil. Accordingly, the Deity always has displayed, and will for ever continue to display, his goodness, just as far as the possibility of such a display is not cut off by transgression of the moral law. But since sin has been actually introduced, it is absolutely inconsistent to suppose, that the divine plan will admit of the same display

of goodness to those, who belong to the mutable system, as it would have admitted, in the opposite case.

The divine goodness has been, still is, and will for ever continue to be, illustriously displayed in the works of creation, of providence, and redemption. For when God had created all things by the word of his power, he took a survey of the magnificent whole, and pronounced it all very good. The sun and moon, with the numberless host of stars; the air and the earth, with all it contains, have, for thousands of years been giving an exhibition of the goodness of the Almighty Creator. The divine goodness shines conspicuous in the wonderful organization of the animated body, and in the far more wonderful faculties of the soul. The goodness of the Deity has also been displayed in every age, in the course of his providence. It was displayed to our first parents, in the garden of Eden; to the numerous inhabitants of the antediluvian world; when the long suffering of God waited for their repentance and reformation, for the space of an hundred and twenty years, in the days of Noah, who was to them a preacher of righteousness, while the ark was preparing: to Noah, who was divinely directed to build an ark, in order to save himself and family from being swept from off the face of the earth, by the overwhelming waters of the universal deluge: to Abraham; who was selected from the rest of mankind; and appointed to be the father of a peculiar people; that by him might be transmitted special privileges, through the long extended line of all future generations: to the children of Israel; when rescued, by the hand of Moses, from Egyptian bondage; when passing through the Red-sea; and when, under the guidance of a pillar of cloud by day, and of

fire by night, they were travelling through the pathless desert, their hunger was satisfied by bread from heaven, and their thirst allayed by waters, flowing from the flinty rock ; till at length they were brought to see the promised inheritance, and take possession of the land, that flowed with milk and honey. And the beneficent Parent of the universe never did, from the creation of the world to the present day, cease, in the course of his providence, to make a display of his goodness to the children of men. "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts xiv. 17.)

But perhaps you will say ; It is true, the divine goodness always has, in some measure been displayed ; but the display has been only *partial*, and very far from being universal. For wherever we turn our eyes, we find Ezekiel's "roll spread out before us, and it is written within and without, and there is written therein lamentations, and mourning, and wo." (Ezek. ii. 10.) Therefore, notwithstanding all the displays of divine goodness, that ever have been actually made ; it still remains true :

That "endless is the list of human ills,
"And sighs might sooner fail, than cause to sigh.
"A part how small of the terraqueous globe
"Is tenanted by man ! the rest a waste :
"Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands !
"Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death !
"Such is earth's melancholy map ! But far
"More sad ! this earth is a true map of man.
"So bounded are its haughty lord's delights
"To woe's wide empire : where deep troubles toss,
"Loud sorrows howl, invenom'd passions bite,
"Ravenous calamities our *vitals* seize,
"And threatening fate wide opens to devour."

YOUNG.

The truth of the fact, according to the representation that has been given, is readily admitted. But you must be careful not to draw from it a wrong inference. You must not conclude, that there is any original want of goodness in the Deity ; nor that he had any predetermined plan, that evil of any kind, rather than good, should ever exist. For it is certain, that he had originally a perfect willingness, and a complete power, to display his goodness, without the actual existence of any evil. Because he could thus have made as complete a display of his justice, and all his other glorious perfections, as he could have done, in any other possible way.

Why then has not the divine goodness been universally displayed, without any instance of the withholding of good ?

We have already given the negative, and we will now give the positive reason ; even that, which is the only one, that ever can be given. “ Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.” (Jer. v. 25.)

The declaration, which Joshua made to the ancient Israelites, does now, and always will, hold true : “ If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods ; then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.” (Josh. xxiv. 20.) The Deity at first begun to display his goodness universally ; and would always thus have continued to do, if sin had never taken place. But since sin has actually been introduced ; the course of his conduct, in many instances, has been directly opposite to what it would otherwise have been..... Mankind have forsaken the Lord ; and therefore he hath turned and done them hurt, after that he hath done them

good. It is true, notwithstanding: That, "they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. For the Lord is a sun and a shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Psal. xxxiv. 10. lxxxiv. 11.)

Though it is already the case; that, in respect to some finite beings, the possibility of all good is irrecoverably lost; and therefore all evil has now, in respect to them, become unalterably fixed; yet since this is not the case universally, therefore, there still remains, in the glorious economy of redemption, a foundation for introducing the infallible security of infinite good; and thus absolutely removing all danger of the introduction of final evil..... This case extends to all, respecting whom the possibility of eternal happiness is still retained in the hand of the Omnipotent Agent. And those of this description consist of two classes.

In one class all are included, who, by the exercise of practical faith, are actually united to the blessed Mediator; and consequently, have received a most sure, and never failing title "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," the glorious displays of divine goodness, which will be made to those of this class, through a length of ages, in number beyond all calculation. And the other class includes all those, whose particular state, in respect to endless futurity, yet remains undecided. With respect to them, there is now, in the hand of the Deity, a perfect balance of power, relative to their eternal happiness, and their eternal misery: between which two infinite extremes they now hang sus-

pended....“ But the time is short.” Soon, very soon, the eternal scale will be turned ; never more to be reversed ; nor the original balance again restored. It is now perfectly consistent with the universal plan of the Deity, to make, to all of this class, a display of his goodness, in a manner so illustrious, and in a degree so great, as to exceed all finite conception ; but there is, at the same time, the most amazing, and the most awful danger of its soon being for ever too late. For there is, every moment, the most tremendous danger, that the one infinite sum of all that is valuable in the universal system ; on which all happiness intirely depends, will, in respect to those, whose case is now under consideration, be for ever lost, beyond all possibility of recovery. And this will most certainly be the case, unless this infinite good is very speedily and effectually secured, by an indissoluble union with the divine Mediator. Because, without such a union, the measure of iniquity will shortly be filled up ; and sin, being finished, will bring forth death ; not only the death of the body ; but also that of the soul ; but not the annihilation of either. For it will reduce the one to its original dust ; and introduce the other into a state of eternal misery. Let the infinite good be once secured ; which must be done before the dissolution of the present mortal frame, or it can never be done at all ; and then, all that sin can ever do, will be to produce the death of the body ; the soul will survive, and enjoy eternal life and happiness.

On the preceding principles, relative to the origin of evil, we can fully vindicate all the perfections of the Deity ; and particularly his justice, his goodness, and his holiness. In the original state of things, previous to the

actual transgression of the moral law, there was no evil, nor any necessity whatever, that evil of any kind should ever exist. Therefore, in order to have a right understanding of the nature and origin of evil, it must be carefully considered; That there is an essential distinction to be made between the moral actions of finite free agents, and all other events whatever. Of the moral actions of finite free agents, there are two kinds; viz. good and evil; though both of these always presuppose *power*, as the *foundation*, yet they never imply any *previous exertion* of power, as the *cause* of their existence. Hence it follows: That all evil begins, not in the original possibility of it, but in the *agreement* of the finite mind with this possibility. And since it is universally the case; That, in the original state of things, there was no possibility of evil, without an equal possibility of good; therefore, there was no original *necessity*, neither *natural* nor *moral*, of any kind of evil.

Every action of a finite agent, which consists in his taking that term of the Deity's original twofold power, which implies a possibility of good, is an action which is morally good; but every action which is directly opposite to this, is morally evil; every such action is a transgression of the moral law, and is denominated SIN..... "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John, iii. 4.) When the finite agent has taken that particular side, against the taking of which, the moral law contains an absolute prohibition, and the solemn inquiry is made, respecting the *reason* of his conduct, he will not be able to give any answer. For in this case, the fact is; that, in reality, there is no reason that can be given. Though

there was, in the original state of things, a foundation ; yet there was no reason whatever, why he should take that side, which, by the moral law, he was absolutely forbidden to take. . Therefore, notwithstanding all the moral evil, that ever has existed, or ever will exist, the Deity is perfectly holy, just, and good. For there is no evil in him, on account of his being invested with a two-fold power. There is no evil in his holding the balance till the proper time arrives for him to turn the scale. And there is no moral evil in his turning the scale, at the proper time, by the actual exertion of his power, just according as he sees fit : that is ; just according to the side, on which any finite agent is actually found. The Deity never violates any just law ; neither the moral law ; which was instituted for the regulation of the conduct of all finite free agents ; nor the law of divine operation ; according to which his own conduct is always invariably regulated.

And since no moral evil can be found in the Deity himself, nor in his power, nor in his agency ; since it cannot be found in the possibility of good, nor in the possibility of evil ; therefore it never can be any where found, but only in the finite agent, who actually transgresses the moral law, by forming an agreement or connexion with the original principle of evil. In this transgression, all moral evil universally consists ; and since it is introduced, without any previous reason whatever, it is justly chargeable wholly to the account of the transgressor..... When moral evil actually exists, the Deity, according to the law of divine operation, does then, but never before, by the actual exertion of his own power, introduce the necessity of evil ; even that, to which the actual trans-

gression of the moral law has a peculiar relation. For *then* is the proper *time* for him to “do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.” (Isa. xxviii. 21.)

Hence it is evident; That the very *beginning* of all *necessity* of evil, is at the *TIME*, when the moral law is violated; previous to which *TIME*, there is *NO NECESSITY* whatever of any kind of *evil*. If you inquire; What is the *reason* of moral evil? we answer; That there is *no reason* whatever. For it is absolutely impossible, that there should be any *reason* for that, which is, in its own nature, perfectly *unreasonable*. With regard to the first introduction of moral evil, there is no reason to be found in the original state of things; nor in the Deity himself; nor in his universal plan of operation; nor in the moral law; nor in any thing else whatever, from which it can ever be inferred, as the necessary result. But the case, with respect to *natural* evil, is intirely different. For when moral evil actually exists; then the Deity, by the exertion of his own power, introduces the necessity of natural evil. For his conduct, in this case, in so turning the scale, that *natural* evil shall be the inevitable consequence of *moral*, is perfectly agreeable to his universal plan of operation. This is the universal plan of him, “who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,” and “who will render to every one according to his deeds.” (Eph. i. 11. Rom. ii. 6.)

Let it be admitted; That there is, in the hand of the supreme Ruler and moral Governor, an original balance of power; and then all the glorious perfections of the Deity, together with his universal plan, law, and government, can, with perfect consistency, be fully vindicated.

And nothing will be wrong....nothing will be found to be wanting, any where in the whole of the universal system, but what relates to finite beings, and what intirely consists in, and originates from, their actual violation of that law, which is perfectly holy, just, and good. Therefore, according to this principle, the Deity will be seated on his eternal throne; invested with all power, on every side; and thus, being Lord of necessity, he will have all effects, that belong to the mutable system, at his disposal; which he can introduce, each in its proper time, according to his sovereign pleasure. All finite free agents will be intirely in his hand, wholly dependent on him, and strictly accountable to him, for all their conduct. On this principle, therefore, the holiness, justice, goodness, knowledge, and power of the Deity can be maintained; and the greatest general good, without the introduction of any evil, can be effectually and for ever secured to all finite beings, in perfect consistency with the universal plan of divine operation.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE DIVINE HAPPINESS.

IT has been observed, in the preceding chapter, that, notwithstanding all the sin and misery that ever has been, or ever will be, introduced into the mutable system, the Deity is perfectly holy, just, and good. We shall now proceed to observe; That the Deity is possessed of infinite, immutable, and eternal happiness, as well as immaculate purity and holiness. For to him necessarily be-

longs a system, which is peculiarly his own; a system, which was in itself completely perfect, in the highest possible degree, previous to there being any created existence; even that immense, immutable, and eternal system, which necessarily contains all absolute and relative perfection. From this system, not only all actual evil, but also the original principle of evil, is absolutely excluded. It is, therefore, of an essentially different nature from the system of mutable existence; for to this belongs an original principle of evil; which principle is the foundation (though not the cause) of all the evil, that ever has existed, or ever will exist. But this principle is not the cause nor the foundation of any *good*; and therefore, all finite free agents are, by the moral law, most strictly forbidden to have any connexion with it, on any account whatever. But from the immutable system of infinite perfection, all actual evil, and every principle of evil, is absolutely and eternally excluded. To the immutable system of infinite perfection, essentially belongs all good, and every principle of good. This system is called HEAVEN. The Deity, therefore, is said to dwell in heaven. And it is in heaven, that all possible happiness, in its highest degree of perfection, is to be for ever enjoyed. In the perfectly pure, immense, and immutable system of infinite perfection, from which all evil, and every principle of evil, is absolutely excluded, is actually and essentially contained the one absolute infinite sum of all that is valuable, in the universal nature of things. And in the complete, unchangeable, and eternal enjoyment of this one infinite sum of all that is valuable, excellent, and actually perfect, in the highest possible degree, the happiness of the ever blessed Jehovah consists. And he

enjoys, not by progressive degrees, but all at once, the whole of this boundless treasure. And, in this case, there is no such thing as a balance of power; because, in respect to him, there is an original possibility of all good, without any possibility of evil. Hence the greatest possible degree of happiness necessarily and essentially belongs to his very nature: and he is utterly incapable of violating, what, in respect to finite beings, is denominated the moral law. The very same infinite good, in the complete enjoyment of which, the whole happiness of the Deity intirely consists, is the foundation, and the only foundation, of all the true happiness of finite beings. The whole sum of all good, is *original*; and essentially belongs to the universal, immutable, and eternal system of uncreated existence; but all evil is intirely of an adventitious nature; not being contained in, nor resulting from, the original state of things. The happiness of the Deity, consisting in the actual enjoyment of all possible good, has been, from eternity, unchangeably secure. The reason is, because, in respect to him, there never was any possibility of evil. But with respect to finite beings, the case is intirely different. For though there is an original possibility of their having an infallible title to the possession of the same infinite good, which the Deity himself enjoys; yet there is also, in respect to them, an original possibility of infinite evil. Hence it is, that they are in an unconfirmed state, in the first stage of their existence. And in this unconfirmed state, as it relates to their final happiness or misery, they will remain, till the original possibility, on one side or the other, is intirely removed. If, by the effectual exercise of a practical faith, they are once united to the divine Mediator; then their

happiness will be as secure, as the happiness of the Deity. There will, however, be a perfect distinction between the two cases. The Deity has, from eternity to eternity, the actual and complete enjoyment of all possible good; whereas finite beings, who are entitled to the eternal possession of the same infinite good, the enjoyment of which constitutes the happiness of the Deity, will be continually making progressive advances, from lower to higher degrees, through endless duration. But in respect to all those, who, without being united to the Mediator, persist, for a time, in transgressing the moral law, till they have filled up the measure of their iniquity, the infinite good, which, according to the original state of things, might have been unalterably secured, will be irrecoverably lost; and therefore perfect misery, continually increasing, without end, will be the inevitable consequence..... But this will not, in the least, diminish nor increase the happiness of the Deity; nor that of those, who have taken him for their boundless portion, and never failing source of enjoyment. For unto them he will say: "Fear not," my children; "I am your shield and your exceeding great reward." (Gen. xv. 1.)

The happiness of the Deity, consisting in the complete enjoyment of the original sum of all possible good, without any possibility of evil, is immutable in its nature, eternal in duration, and absolutely infinite in degree; and therefore cannot admit any increase nor diminution, from all the changes, that ever can take place, in the whole system of created existence. For all that can be done, by the greatest change, which ever can possibly take place, in the mutable system, is to secure that infinite original good, which essentially belongs to the divine nature; or

introduce that infinite evil, of which there is only a mere possibility, but no necessity, in the original state of things. But a change, in regard to either of these two infinite extremes, can have no effect, but only with relation to finite beings. For it is, in respect to them alone, that the infinite original good remains to be secured; and it is only in respect to them, that there ever can be the introduction of any evil; in respect to them only, there is an original balance of power; and therefore for them only, the moral law is ordained.

There is, in the original state of things, a very remarkable distinction in respect to good and evil. The greatest possible good is essential to the absolute perfection of the universal system; and in the actual, all comprehensive perception of this, the happiness of the Deity consists; and this same infinite, immutable, and eternal good is the only foundation of all the happiness of finite beings. But, with regard to evil, the case is intirely different; for EVIL does not originally belong to the system; but is wholly of an extraneous or adventitious nature. Hence it is, that the Deity calls the production of natural evil "his work, his *strange* work; his act, his *strange* act." (Isa. xxviii. 21.) That evil cannot, in any way whatever, be conducive to good, is evident; because there actually is, in the original state of things, a complete system of absolute perfection, containing the greatest possible good, without any evil, and without any necessity of its ever being introduced. Evil cannot be conducive to the happiness of the Deity; for in respect to him, there is the greatest possible good, without any possibility of evil. Evil cannot be conducive to the happiness of finite beings; because their whole happiness intirely de-

pende on that same infinite good, which the Deity himself enjoys. Since evil can never be conducive to any good, and since it is not indifferent; therefore it is universally of a hurtful nature. And, for this very reason, a law was originally ordained, containing a strict prohibition against its ever being introduced into actual existence. And since it is certain, that there is, in the divine nature, an original necessity of the happiness of the Deity, and an original possibility of the universal happiness of the whole perceptive system of finite beings; therefore, neither the happiness of the Creator nor that of his creatures has any dependence upon, nor connexion with, the actual existence, or even the possibility, of evil. For if no evil did actually exist, and all possibility of it was intirely removed; then the greatest happiness of the whole system of created, as well as uncreated existence would be unalterably secure. There is, therefore, the greatest inconsistence implied in the supposition; That any happiness can ever be introduced, or secured, by the Deity's removing the possibility of good, and retaining the possibility of evil. This consideration, may, perhaps, lead you to inquire: Why, then, does he, in any instance, actually remove the possibility of good and retain that of evil, if he cannot, in this way, introduce, nor secure, any happiness to himself, nor to any other being? We answer: that he never does any thing of this nature, till the time when the moral law is violated by the finite agent, for whom it was originally ordained. But when *that* time actually arrives; then the supreme Agent, the Universal Moral Governor, in perfect conformity to his own law of divine operation, remits the possibility of good and retains that of evil, in respect to the violator of

the moral law. And he thus conducts, because this is perfectly agreeable to the unchangeable rectitude of his universal plan of moral government, in relation to finite free agents. If you should now be disposed to ask : Why he performs this kind of operation, at a certain particular *time* ; viz. when finite agents violate the moral law ? The answer is : Because then, but never before, is the *proper time*. At *that* time, but never previous to that, “ The Lord will rise up as in mount Perazim, he will be wroth, as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work ; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.” And it may then with propriety be said to him ; “ It is *TIME* for thee, Lord, to work : for they have made void thy law.” (Isa. xxviii. 21. Psal. cxix. 126.)

The Deity, being completely and unchangeably happy, always has had, has now, and for ever will have, a perfect willingness, that all finite beings, in respect to whom there is any possibility of happiness, should also be happy. And therefore it is of the highest importance, that the moral law should not be transgressed ; that so the necessity of evil, which never belonged to the original state of things, may never be actually introduced. And it is likewise most important, that the glorious gospel should be fully embraced ; so that the possibility of that infinite, original good, on which all happiness, in the created and uncreated system, intirely depends, may not be in any danger of ever being lost ; but that, in respect to all finite percipient beings, who have not yet fallen within the fatal grasp of the necessity of infinite evil, it may be as firmly secured, as it is, and eternally has been, in respect to the ever blessed Jehovah. His happiness is unalterably secure ; because, in respect to him,

there never has been any possibility of evil. And the happiness of all finite beings, who are capable of being happy, may be rendered equally secure. In respect to security, therefore, the happiness of the creature, and that of the Creator, may be the same; in respect to the degree, however, there must always remain a difference as great as that which subsists between whatever is finite and infinity.

The happiness of the “blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,” is too great to be described or conceived by any finite mind. Let any created being be completely happy, to the utmost extent of his capacity: Let his capacity be continually enlarged, and his happiness proportionably increased, from one degree to another, in the most rapid progression, for countless millions of ages: Yet his happiness will still be finite, even in the highest degree, to which it can ever be advanced, in any limited duration; and therefore it will bear no proportion to the happiness of the Deity.

With regard to any finite being, who is in a confirmed state of happiness; he never can, at any one time, actually enjoy, but only a finite portion of the inexhaustible treasure, to which he has a never failing title. It is the boundless sum of happiness, which will always remain to be enjoyed, that is properly infinite. And therefore, how great so ever may be the degree of happiness, which he can, at any one time, actually enjoy, a greater degree will remain to be enjoyed, at another time; and after that a greater; and a greater still, in endless progression. But with regard to the Deity, the case is infinitely different. For he actually enjoys the whole sum of all possible happiness, at once; and therefore, his happiness is

not only as durable as eternity ; but it is, even now, and at all times has been, as boundless as immensity.

He possesses a perfectly pure, intellectual, universal, immutable, and eternal system ; absolutely abstracted from matter and motion, and from all those sensible appearances, that present themselves to the view of any finite mind ; a system, in respect to which, there is neither the actual existence, nor the possibility of evil..... And this being the case, his happiness is absolutely unchangeable, in its nature, and actually infinite, in degree : and therefore it cannot be in any way affected ; it cannot be increased nor diminished, by any of the changes, that ever can possibly be introduced into the system of mutable existence. The happiness of the Deity consists in his all-comprehensive perception of the one infinite whole of all that is valuable in this most glorious system ; a system infinitely more excellent than that, in which the possibility of evil is contained ; and to which all finite perceptive beings naturally belong, in the first stage of their existence. Inexpressibly happy are all those, who, by a union to the Mediator, have been translated out of that system, which contains an original possibility of evil, into that infinitely glorious system, of absolute perfection, which essentially belongs to the Deity.

You may now, perhaps, be disposed to inquire ; Why sin, if it cannot injure the Deity, nor, in any way whatever, interrupt his happiness, is to be considered, as being an infinite evil ? We answer : That sin is to be considered as being an infinite evil ; because its very nature and tendency is to destroy infinite good. And for that

reason, an infinitely benevolent law was originally ordained, absolutely prohibiting sin's ever having any actual existence. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." It renders it necessary for the Deity, in the prosecution of his universal plan of operation, to remit, in respect to the sinner, the possibility of all good, and retain the possibility of all evil. And this implies an absolute impossibility of happiness, and an absolute necessity of misery. The case, therefore, in respect to the finally impenitent sinner, is just the same, as if all that original good, in the enjoyment of which the whole happiness of the Deity consists, and on which the happiness of all finite beings depends, was totally and eternally destroyed. Since such, then, is the nature of sin, it may, with the strictest propriety, be considered as being an infinite evil. Such was the original state of things, and such the universal plan of the Deity, that the whole perceptive system might all have been completely happy, without the introduction of any evil. For it is impossible, in the nature of things, that the violation of a perfectly good law should ever be attended, either directly or occasionally, with any valuable consequence. But all true happiness, that ever did, or ever will exist, whether it is the happiness of the Deity, or that of any other being, universally has its WHOLE foundation, not in evil, nor in any possibility of evil; but in good; even in that one infinite original sum of all possible good, which essentially belongs to, and is necessarily implied in, the divine nature.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

KNOWLEDGE universally consists in a perfect perception of certainty; and certainty (that is, objective certainty) consists in possibility; and possibility is the same as power. Consequently; since the Deity is a being of infinite power, he is, therefore, a being of infinite knowledge; for his power is the direct and immediate object of his knowledge. Now, since all events intirely depend on power or possibility; and since the Deity always has an unerring, intuitive view of his own infinite power; therefore he always has, from eternity to eternity, a perfectly exact and certain knowledge of the universal state of all possible events, from the least to the greatest, in respect to the past, present, and future.

The hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm contains a most beautiful and sublime description of the divine Omniscience. And in a great variety of other passages of scripture, this is also asserted in the most express and positive terms. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. Neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him, with whom we have to do. For the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart. Then hear thou, in

heaven, thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do ; and give to every man according to his ways ; whose heart thou knowest ; for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Great is our Lord, and of great power ; his understanding is infinite." (Prov. xv. 3. Job xxxiv. 21, 22. Heb. iv. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 3. xvi. 7. 1 Kin. viii. 29. Acts xv. 18. 1 John iii. 20. Psal. cxlvii. 5.)

The Omniscient Jehovah not only knows all things that are, and have been ; but likewise all that ever *will be*. He has a perfect previous knowledge of all future events of every kind, without any exception. He knows, with indubitable certainty, even to the minutest circumstance, every event, that ever will actually take place, in any period of futurity, through endless duration. And therefore, he knows all the volitions of free agents, with all their consequences. "Remember the former things of old : for I am God, and there is none else ; I am God, and there is none beside me. Declaring the end from the beginning ; and from ancient times the things that are not yet done : saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. xlv. 9, 10.)

There are two things, each of which always implies CERTAINTY. And these are NECESSITY and CONTINGENCE. And according to the original order of things, *contingence*, as far as it extends, always *precedes necessity* ; and it is by the removal of contingency, that necessity is introduced. Hence the state of things, relative to the mutable system, may be changed from contingency to necessity ; but the reverse of this is impossible. Consc-

quently ; we may advance forward, from a state of contingency to that of necessity ; but we never can retrace our steps, by returning back, in a retrograde order..... Since necessity and contingency, each of them, implies certainty ; and since every event, without exception, is either necessary or contingent ; therefore, the Deity has a completely perfect and universal knowledge of all events. For it is always the case, that necessity implies certainty ; therefore, this is universally the direct and immediate object of divine knowledge. And in respect to whatever *is*, or *has been*, present, there is no such thing as any possibility, but only what implies necessity ; in this case, therefore, possibility, certainty, and necessity, are all identically one and the same, without any distinction. Hence it follows : That with regard to every event, in respect to the present time, if there is a possibility ; then there is a certainty : and if there is a certainty ; then there is a necessity of its being now actually existent, at the same time. Every thing, therefore, of a mutable, as well as every thing of an immutable nature, from the least to the greatest, that now actually exists, any where in immensity, is, in respect to the PRESENT TIME, unalterably fixed, by necessity. In respect to the *present time*, therefore, *necessity* is the direct and immediate object of the Omniscient Jehovah's perfect and intuitive knowledge of all things, now actually existing through the whole of his boundless dominion. And this same general observation will apply with respect to the *past*, as well as the *present*.

Since the Deity always has an immediate, all-comprehensive view of the reality of things, without the intervention of any appearance ; therefore there never can be,

in his mind, any such thing as what, in respect to finite beings, is denominated *doubt*, or mental uncertainty. All the view, that finite perceptive beings can have of the reality of things, is through the medium of appearance ; commonly called *evidence*. When the whole degree of evidence is imperfect ; then the perception resulting from it, is called mental *uncertainty*, or *doubt* ; but whenever the evidence, which is sometimes the case, is perfect ; that is, when it perfectly corresponds to the reality, to which it relates ; then the correspondent perception is what we call *mental certainty*, or *knowledge*. For whenever, in any particular case, there is perfect evidence, in relation to any reality ; then the perception, which corresponds to the evidence, will, at the same time, correspond to the reality, to which the evidence relates. And thus it is, that finite beings, through the medium of perfect evidence, may have, in a limited degree, a certain knowledge of the reality of things ; for through such a medium they may, with indubitable certainty, know *some* things ; but the Deity, without the intervention of any medium whatever, perfectly knows *all* things. In respect to every thing that now exists, he has a perfect knowledge of the necessity of its actual existence ; and also, in respect to every thing that does not exist, in the present time, he perfectly knows the impossibility of its actually existing in the same time. In respect to the present time, there is no such thing as contingency ; but every thing that exists, is fixed in a state of 'actual existence by necessity ; and every thing, that does not exist, is excluded from a state of actual existence, by impossibility. And as the state of every thing is now unalterably fixed, in respect to the present time ; so likewise,

when any time whatever, which is now future, comes to be actually present, the state of every thing will *then* be unalterably fixed, in respect to *that* time.

From what has been observed it is evident: That, with regard to every thing, that now exists, the Deity knows that it exists; because, in respect to the present time, there is now a necessity of its existence. And with regard to every thing, that does not exist, he knows that it does not exist; because, in respect to the present time, there is a necessity of its not existing. Therefore, he perfectly knows the whole state of things, in respect to the present time, throughout immensity; because, in respect to the present time, every thing, even in a whole immensity, is now unalterably fixed by necessity. Necessity universally implies certainty; and certainty is the immediate object of divine knowledge. And when any time whatever, which is now future, comes to be actually present; the whole state of things throughout immensity, will *then*, in respect to *that time*, be unalterably fixed by necessity; necessity will *then* imply certainty; and the certainty, that will then be present, will be the immediate object of the divine knowledge of the universal state of every thing in immensity, at that time. As the Deity perfectly knows what the whole state of things actually *is*, at the time, which is now present; so he *will* perfectly know what the whole state of things actually will be, at any *future time*, when it comes to be actually present. And as there is no contingency, in respect to the time, which is now present; so there *will* be no contingency, in respect to any future time, when the time, that is now future, comes to be actually present; because the universal state of every thing in immensity will, *in respect to that time*, be

then fixed by necessity. Hence it is evident; That necessity is *now* the immediate object of the divine knowledge of every thing that now exists; and that, in every future time, necessity *will be* the immediate object of divine knowledge, respecting every thing, that will, at that time, actually exist. Therefore the Deity has now, and, in every future time, will have, a perfect knowledge of *every thing*, even to the minutest circumstance, through the whole of a boundless immensity. “The very hairs of your head are all numbered. He telleth the number of the stars: he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord and of great power: his understanding is infinite.” (Matth. x. 30. Psal. cxlvii. 4, 5.) The Deity, therefore, has a perfect knowledge of the whole material system; the parts of which, consisting of vast masses of matter, in constant motion, are interspersed through infinite space. He knows the number, and the nature, of all the rays of light, that are continually emitted from that stupendous globe of fire, the Sun, to the astonishing distance of millions of millions of miles, on every side. He has a most exact and perfect knowledge of the size, the position, and the form, of every particle of matter, which is contained in the whole terraqueous globe, and the surrounding atmosphere. He knows all the changes which are continually taking place, in endless variety..... He knows every action, every thought, and every volition of all percipient beings. There is not, and there never will be, any thing so small, as to be below, or any thing so great, as to be above, the divine knowledge.

Having shown; That the Deity, while time is continually flowing from the future to the present, and from the present to the past, perfectly knows every thing, that

there is in immensity ; we shall now proceed to another branch of the subject, which is intirely distinct from that, which has been under consideration. And this is to show ; That the Deity perfectly knows every thing, that *will be* in eternity. For he not only has a knowledge of every thing that is, *at the time* of its actual existence ; but he has, also, a *previous* knowledge of every thing that *will be*, even to the remotest period of futurity. And this is what is commonly denominated *foreknowledge*. This is that kind of knowledge, which relates to the previous state of things, in respect to all future events, with all their consequences, and attendant circumstances, even to the most minute particular, through endless duration.... For with regard to all future events, there is always a *previous actual certainty* ; and this previous certainty is to be considered in a twofold view ; viz. as being general, and particular. The Deity always has a most exact and perfect knowledge, not only of the general, but also of the particular, previous state of things, in respect to every future event, without any exception, through the whole of a boundless eternity. And therefore he always can, with perfect exactness, foretel what will, and what will not, be actually present, in any future time whatever. And now let it be considered : That with regard to future events, three things are to be distinctly observed, and always kept in view. Assume any future event whatever, in relation to any given future time. Then, respecting the assumed event, whatever it may be, it is universally the case :

First ; That there is *now* a *general necessity* of its being present, or not present, at the given time.

Secondly ; There will, when the given time comes to be actually present, be a *particular necessity* of its being present ; or a *particular necessity* of its not being present, *at that particular time*.

Thirdly ; There is *now a particular certainty*, that the assumed event will be present ; or a *particular certainty*, that it will not be present, in the given future time.

First : It must always be admitted, as a principle, which is universally and immutably true ; That there is *now a general necessity* of the assumed event's being present, or not present, in the given future time. This general necessity is implied in the Divine Mind itself ; and therefore it universally relates to all events, and is always invariably the same. But from this it does not follow, as a direct consequence, that there is any *particular necessity* of its being present ; nor, that there is any *particular necessity* of its not being present, in any future time. For there is an essential distinction between *general* and *particular* necessity. Therefore, from admitting (what always must be admitted) that there is now, and from all eternity has been, an absolute *general* determination or decree ; That every event shall be present, or not present, in every future time ; it does not follow, as a legitimate consequence ; That there is *now any particular* determination or decree, that any future event shall be present ; nor, that there is any *particular* determination or decree, that any future event shall *not* be present, in any future time. For *particular necessity*, respecting any event, in the system of mutable existence, is not implied in the Divine Mind, absolutely considered ; but it is the *Divine Agency*, consisting in the Deity's remitting the possibility on one side, and retaining it on the other ; and thus removing original contingency, which

introduces *particular necessity*, at any time, and in respect to any event, just according as the supreme Agent sees fit. For in the original order of things, relative to the mutable system, it is universally the case; That CON-
TINGENCE precedes PARTICULAR NECESSITY. Therefore, though there is now, and always has been, in the Divine Mind itself, a *general* necessity, with respect to all events; yet there was not, in the original state of things, relating to the mutable system, any *particular* necessity; but there was an original *contingence*. Therefore, the Deity has the absolute, original control of *particular necessity*; and consequently, it remains with him, by the EXERTION of his own power, to remove original contingency, and thus introduce necessity, whenever the *proper time* for its introduction actually arrives: and he always does introduce it, at just such a time, as his universal, original plan of operation requires.

Secondly: There will, when the given future time comes to be actually present, be a *particular necessity* of the assumed event's being present; or a *particular necessity* of its not being present, at that particular time. From admitting this, however, it does not follow; That there is *now* any particular necessity, relative to the assumed event. For it is a fact, that there are many future events, which, in some future time, will become *necessary*; but which are *now* *contingent*. Therefore, from admitting, that there *will be* the necessity of any event, we cannot infer, that necessity is *already* introduced.

Thirdly: In respect to every future event, without exception, whether there is, or is not, any particular necessity, there is NOW a PARTICULAR CERTAINTY of its being present; or a PARTICULAR CERTAINTY of its not being present, in any given future time. This pre-

vious certainty, relative to all future events belonging to the mutable system, was originally the same as contingency; but there are some instances, in which original contingency has been removed, and necessity introduced.

For there are two cases, in which the original balance of power is already removed; that is, the scale is now irreversibly turned, not merely in respect to any *one* future time only, but also in respect to a *whole eternity*.

The first case relates to all those of that class, who, by the effectual exercise of a practical faith, have been actually united to the glorious Mediator. Previous to this union, there was an equal possibility on each side, in respect to the two amazing future events....eternal happiness and eternal misery. But now the original possibility is remitted on one side, and retained on the other; and the remaining possibility, viz. that which relates to eternal happiness, is the same as necessity. Therefore this all-important event, which was originally contingent, is now become unalterably fixed. The other case relates to all those of that class, who have persisted in transgressing the moral law, and in rejecting the gospel, till, having filled up the measure of their iniquity, natural death has brought their probationary state to a final close. That which, previous to this awful period, was only mere possibility, is now become necessity; even the inflexible necessity of eternal misery. Those two future events were, originally, both of them contingent. But the original contingency being now removed, a necessity is introduced, which must remain for ever. But what we propose to take a particular view of, at present, is that state of things, respecting all such future events, as never have yet been *decided* by the actual exertion of divine power.

With regard to every event, that belongs to this class, there is *now* an equal possibility, on each side ; and therefore, there is no particular necessity, on either side..... Hence there may arise an inquiry, which may seem to be of very difficult solution. If there is any future event, in respect to which there is now a possibility of its being present, and also an equal possibility of its not being present, in any future time ; then how can it be *known* whether the proposed event will be present or not, at the given time ? Conjectures may be formed concerning it ; but how can there be any *certain knowledge* ; since, according to the statement, there is, on each side, an equal possibility ? In answer to this inquiry, it may be observed ; That, if there is a particular *certainly*, that the event will be present ; or a particular *certainly*, that it will not be present ; then it may be *certainly known* whether it will be actually present or not. But the question, you will say, still returns ; How can there be any CERTAINTY without NECESSITY ? If a satisfactory answer can be given to this last inquiry ; then *that* will be a final decision of the question, respecting the divine foreknowledge of future events.

That there is, in the present case, a particular *certainly*, on one side or the other, without any particular *necessity*, will be evident, if it is carefully considered : That the particular state of things, in respect to the proposed future event, is now DIFFERENT from what it *will be*, when the time, which is now future, becomes actually present. For there is now a *balance of power*, in respect to the given future time. But when the future time comes to be *actually present*, the scale will be turned ; so that there will be, but only *one possibility*, in respect to *that*

time; which possibility will *then* be the same as necessity.

The true state of the case, then, is this: There are now two equal possibilities; viz. an affirmative and a negative. The Supreme Universal Agent is now invested with a twofold power, in respect to the proposed future event; but when the given future time, to which this twofold power now relates, comes to be actually present; then there will, in respect to *that* time, be but *one* possibility. Because the Deity, in perfect conformity to his universal plan, is unalterably determined, that he will, when the proper time arrives, remove *one* of the two possibilities, which are now present, and retain the *other*..... But though he has already determined, *in general*, that necessity shall be introduced, on one side or the other; yet he has not determined, *in particular*, on which side it shall be. Because the *time*, for such a *particular* determination, has not yet actually arrived. For, in the prosecution of his universal plan, he always takes his *own time* for the *exertion* of his *own power*. For though all power has been from *eternity*; yet such is the nature of it, that it requires a particular *time*, in order to its being *actually exerted*. Hence it follows: That the Deity does not exert *all* his power at once; but he is always exerting it, as time is continually flowing from the future to the present, and from the present to the past. And it is by the *actual exertion* of divine power, and by *that* alone, that any particular event is *determined*. Therefore, in the case, which is now the subject of examination, the particular state of the proposed future event is not yet decided. But, notwithstanding this, there is, even now, a *particular certainty* of its being present, or a *particular certainty* of its

not being present, at the given time ; because one of the two possibilities is *now different* from what it *will be* : and that one, which is thus different, is what we call CONTINGENCE. And contingency universally implies CERTAINTY. For if the possibility of any event's being present is now different from what it will be ; then it is *certain*, that the event will *not* be present ; but if the possibility of its *not* being present is different ; then it is *certain* that the event *will be* present. Therefore *affirmative contingency* universally implies *negative certainty* ; and *negative contingency* always implies *affirmative certainty*.

That there was, originally, such a thing as contingency, as well as necessity, is evident from the following consideration ; viz. That there are two perfectly distinct original systems. One consists of immensity and eternity, implying one infinite Mind ; possessed of all possible perfection. This system, considered abstractly from the whole, and every part, of the system of imperfect existence, is, in its own nature, absolutely infinite, and in the highest possible degree, completely perfect. Every thing in this system, is unalterably fixed, by original necessity. The other system is that, in which all mutable existence is contained : consisting of matter and motion, with all their modifications ; and finite minds, with all their perceptions, actions, and volitions. And in this last mentioned system, is contained original contingency ; implying possibility without necessity. In *this system*, therefore, things were not originally fixed ; but they are fixed from time to time, by that particular necessity, which is successively introduced, one time after another, by divine agency ; that is, by the Deity's actually exerting, at different times, his original power, according to his own

universal plan of operation. But respecting the immutable system, the case is intirely different. For this is, in itself, abstractly considered, absolutely perfect, in the highest possible degree. It is, therefore, utterly incapable of being, in any respect, changed, augmented, or diminished. It contains the whole sum of all possible good, without any possible evil, as it respects the one infinite Mind, to whom, by original necessity, it essentially belongs. There is such a thing, therefore, as an absolutely complete, and infinitely perfect system, without the actual existence, or even the possibility of evil. And this system is, in its very nature, utterly incapable of ever receiving any improvement, or any injury. But the mutable system is capable of being essentially improved, or essentially injured, in respect to those, who, in the accepted time, effectually comply with the gospel ; or, continuing to reject it, persist, through the whole of their probationary state, in transgressing the law. For in one case, the supreme " Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," will remove the possibility of all evil, and thus infallibly secure the greatest possible good. But in the other case, he will remove the possibility of all good ; and therefore will introduce the necessity of the greatest possible evil. In each of these cases, the mutable system will be intirely changed, from what it was, in its original state, with regard to the *individuals*, included in each case respectively ; and consequently it will, in respect to *them*, be essentially improved, or essentially injured.

That there is, in the original constitution of things, relative to the mutable system, a possibility of securing the greatest good, without any necessity of the introduction of evil, is most clearly evident, from a consideration

of the twofold power, with which the Deity is originally invested ; and also from the kind, affectionate, and infinitely benevolent language, which he uses on this subject. Surely, every heart, which the following most affecting words will not melt, must be possessed of more than adamant hardness. “ And the Lord sent unto you all his servants, the prophets, rising early and sending them : but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever : and go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them ; and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands, and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord ; that ye might provoke me to anger, with the works of your hands, to your own hurt.” (Jer. xxv. 4.... 7.) Here we have a specimen of true eloquence, sufficient to pierce the inmost soul of every one, who is not hardened beyond all description....“Provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands, saith the Lord, and I will do you NO HURT.”...After such an endearing and most pathetic declaration from the mouth of the Almighty, it is perfectly unreasonable to suppose, that he had any absolute, original design of introducing evil ; and therefore there was no original necessity of its introduction. But now the state of things, respecting evil, is essentially changed. And this change has been introduced, intirely by the conduct of finite agents, in their transgression of the moral law. The benevolent Parent of the universe never had any original design to do you any hurt ; but, if you provoke him to anger, by trans-

gressing that perfectly good and holy law, which was expressly designed to guard you against all evil; then, because the very nature of your case will necessarily require it, "he will turn and do you hurt, after that he hath done you good." (Josh. xxiv. 20.)

To the immutable system of infinite perfection it peculiarly belongs to be without any possibility of evil. But such is the nature of the Deity, as to admit *another* system; viz. a moral system of mutable existence. And this implies a possibility, but not any original necessity, of evil. If therefore, you should admit, as a leading principle; That there is only *one* system; and that, in this *one* system, there was an *original necessity* of evil; a necessity consisting in, or resulting from, a particular predetermination of all future events, without which, the Deity could not have a certain knowledge of every thing in immensity and eternity; and without which, he could not secure the greatest possible good of the whole; you will be liable to be led into a train of inextricable errors. For with respect to such a method of attempting to vindicate the divine character; even though you should adopt and pursue it, with all that kind of honest zeal, which Paul, before his conversion, possessed; yet the Deity, who always has an infallible discernment of the real truth from every error, in its most specious appearance, will say: "Who hath required this at your hand." (Isa. i. 12.)

Since the introduction of evil can be of no advantage, in any respect whatever, but is, on the contrary, a real injury: therefore the Deity, from an infinitely benevolent regard for the greatest good of all finite agents, in the moral system of mutable existence, ordained for them

a law, by which he absolutely required them to have no connexion with the possibility of evil; but to leave that intirely with him; that he might remove it, whenever he should see fit. Because he perfectly well knew from the beginning, that, if any finite agent should take hold of the prohibited term of his twofold power, it would then, according to his own universal plan, be absolutely required, that the possibility of good should be remitted and the possibility of evil retained, in respect to the transgressor. And hence it evidently and undeniably follows: that the supposition, That the mutable system, in its original state, implied a *possibility*, but yet was perfectly free from all *necessity*, of evil, is intirely consistent with the nature, and with all the glorious perfections, of the Deity; with the moral law; and with the law of divine operation. The greatest possible good, without any possibility of evil, essentially and eternally belongs to the universal system of infinite perfection. But evil, instead of being essentially, or occasionally, necessary to the perfection or improvement of *any* system, is always absolutely injurious to the system, into which it is actually introduced. That evil is not necessary to the perfection of *any* system is evident; because it is certain, that there is an absolute immutable system of the highest possible degree of perfection, *without any possibility of evil*. Therefore the more free any system is from the actual existence, and even from the possibility of evil, the greater is its perfection.

From what has been observed, it is evident; That there was no possibility of evil without an equal possibility of good, in the original state of things; just as far, therefore, as there was any possibility of evil, there was

CONTINGENCE. And consequently, just as far as there is now, in any case, a necessity of evil, the original state of things, relative to the mutable system, has, by transgression of the moral law, been changed from what it was at first. All original contingency, however, has not yet been removed : for there is a vast variety of instances, in which no necessity has ever yet been actually introduced. Because that Omnipotent Being, who has the universal control of all such necessity, has never yet exerted his power for its introduction ; the proper time for that purpose not having yet actually arrived. For he has before him, in full and perfect view, a whole eternity, in the various parts of which, he can perform his own operations, each in its due order, according to the counsel of his own will. And whether you embrace or reject the plan, which he has prescribed for the regulation of *your* conduct ; yet he will invariably pursue *his own* universal plan of operation : the result of which, relative to *your* final state, will be happy or miserable, to the utmost extreme, and the longest duration, just according as you will, or will not, be found, at the close of your present natural life, to have effectually complied with the infinitely benevolent directions, which he has given you to follow. From a careful consideration of the preceding principles you will see, that, in order to form a just estimate of the divine foreknowledge, the distinction between *necessity* and *contingence* must always be kept in view.

It is of the greatest importance to have correct ideas, with regard to the divine knowledge ; especially the foreknowledge of future events. For to admit, as a leading principle, an erroneous opinion, respecting this subject,

may be attended with the most dangerous consequences. The supposition, that the Deity cannot *certainly foreknow* any future event, but only what he has *predetermined*; and therefore, that there is, an original predetermination, implying a particular previous necessity, relative to every future event, is directly repugnant to the moral law; inconsistent with the free agency of finite beings; and subversive of the principles of practical religion. For the moral law and the gospel were designed intirely for the use and benefit of finite free agents; that they, in pursuance of the plan, therein prescribed, might so conduct as to render it consistent for the Deity, in the prosecution of his own plan, to save them from all evil, and unalterably secure to them the eternal enjoyment of all possible good: even the same good, in the infinite perception of which, consists his own immutable felicity. But if the Deity has, by an absolute decree, predetermined the particular state of all future events; then finite moral agents can have nothing for the rule of their conduct, but only the divine decree; and this is a rule, which it is impossible for them ever to transgress. The supposition, that every future event was absolutely fixed, by an original decree, is directly contradictory to the supposition, that there was any law, strictly prohibiting the introduction of evil into the system of mutable existence. That there was such a prohibitory law is certain; and therefore, there never was any original decree or predetermination, that there ever should be the actual existence of evil. But on the contrary; there was an original possibility of preventing all evil, and of securing, to all finite moral agents, all the good that is contained in the universal immutable system of infinite perfection.

From the preceding observations it is evident; That though necessity universally implies certainty; yet certainty does not universally imply necessity. And the reason is, because, in respect to the system of mutable existence, there is a perfect distinction between the divine power, in its *original state*, and the *actual exertion* of it, at any particular time. Original power, in relation to future events, always implies *certainty*; and therefore, there is now, and always has been, an actual certainty, and consequently a perfect knowledge, of all future events, even through endless duration. And when original power is *actually exerted*, by the Supreme Agent, to whom all power belongs, it does then, but not before, imply *necessity*, respecting those events, with regard to which, there always was a previous certainty, before ever any particular necessity was actually introduced. The Supreme Agent does not exert, at once, all the power, which is ever to be exerted: But, being clothed with Omnipotence, and being absolute Lord of necessity, he looks, with an unerring view, through eternity, and exerts his power, from time to time, according to his own will, just as he sees fit; that is, in perfect conformity to his universal plan of operation. And thus, being infinitely above the control of all other beings, he does, from time to time, introduce a *particular necessity*, with respect to those events, to which his original power relates, and of which, therefore, he previously had, even from eternity, a perfect knowledge. For according to what has been already observed; divine power, in its original state, prior to any actual exertion of it, by which particular necessity is introduced, always implies certainty; and certainty is always the direct and immediate object of divine

knowledge. Hence it is evident ; That the perfect knowledge of all futurity, which the Deity has always possessed, does not originate in any particular predetermination of future events ; but it results intirely from the *power* with which he is originally invested. For, since the Deity's original power, before it is actually exerted, always implies certainty ; and certainty is always the immediate object of his knowledge ; therefore he perfectly knows what will be the particular state of every future event, *before its particular state is actually determined.....* It is not merely by his original power, but it is by the *actual exertion* of it, at the proper time, that he forms a *particular decree*, respecting any future event. Therefore the divine foreknowledge, though it extends to all future events, through a whole eternity ; yet does not, in the least, interfere with the free agency of finite beings. The reason is ; because, in respect to all such events, there is an original CERTAINTY : or, in other words ; there is original power, previous to actual exertion. And therefore, the Deity has a perfect knowledge of every future event, in the whole system of mutable existence, previous to his determining its particular state, by the actual exertion of his original power.

Since the Deity views every thing exactly according to what it is, in reality ; and always knows, with unerring certainty, the actual state of every thing, in all possible cases ; therefore he always has a most perfect knowledge of all future events ; whether there is, or is not, any particular previous necessity, with respect to the events, which are known. Whatever is necessary, he knows to be necessary ; and whatever is contingent, he knows to be contingent ; for *contingence*, as well as *ne-*

ecessity, always implies certainty. In all cases, in which there are two equal possibilities, the Deity can, by the exertion of his original power, in remitting possibility on one side, and retaining it on the other, change the state of any event, from contingency to necessity. But this order of things can never be inverted: necessity can never be changed to contingency. And let it always be remembered, that there are two perfectly distinct systems; viz. an immutable system of infinite perfection; and a system of mutable existence. It is to this last, and to this only, that original contingency relates; with respect to this, therefore, it is, that original contingency is, from time to time, removed, and necessity introduced, by the actual exertion of divine power. For it is evident, that time, as well as eternity, belongs to the Deity; and therefore he exerts his own power, in his own time. And by the actual exertion of his power, in removing contingency and introducing necessity, according to his own universal plan of operation, he forms his decrees; by which he fixes the final destiny of finite agents, who belong to the system of mutable existence. In the order of things, according to the original constitution of the mutable system, contingency precedes necessity; and, therefore, there is an essential distinction between what is implied in the divine *foreknowledge*, and what is implied in a *decree*. For the Deity has a perfect knowledge of all future events, previous to the introduction of necessity, by any particular decree. Consequently; it ought never to be supposed; That, because every thing was originally foreknown, therefore, every thing was originally decreed. For, to suppose, That evil was originally predetermined by a divine decree, necessarily involves the

supposition, 'That the divine decree and the moral law are at perfect variance with each other ; and therefore, that all finite agents, in the moral system, are under the absolute necessity, either of violating the divine decree, or transgressing the moral law. It is evident, therefore, that there was not, in the original state of things, any necessity of evil. For with respect to the immutable system of infinite perfection, there is now, and always was, a universal necessity of all possible good, without any possibility of evil ; and with respect to the system of mutable existence, there was no original possibility of evil, without an equal possibility of good. There never was, therefore, any original necessity of evil, neither in the mutable, nor in the immutable system. And consequently, it is not the case, that any kind of evil ever was, or ever will be, essential to the perfection, the benefit, or improvement of *any system whatever*. And hence it is, that all evil, as we have before observed, is of an extraneous or adventitious nature. Therefore the natural evil, which the Supreme Legislator inflicts on the transgressors of his moral law, is said to be "his work, his *strange* work ; his act, his *strange* act."

We shall now exhibit a summary view of the whole doctrine, relative to the divine knowledge, respecting future events. Assume any event whatever, with relation to any future time : then the following observations will, after the strictest examination, be found to be universally true.

1. It is always the case ; that there is ONE absolute, universal, immutable, and eternal possibility ; that is, a possibility of the assumed event's being present, or not present, at the given time. This one possibility is the

same as necessity ; and it is that one infinite, adorable principle, which continually regulates and governs every thing through all immensity and endless futurity ; this is the Power of all other powers. For it is that universal Power, which is connected with all particular possibility ; and which has the absolute control over all particular necessity, relative to every part of the mutable system, in time and eternity. This one possibility, therefore, which implies a universal necessity respecting every event ; that is, an absolute GENERAL NECESSITY of every event's being present, or not present, is the same as the Divine Mind, or the Deity himself.

2. The *universal* Possibility, that has been mentioned, is of such a nature, as to admit of two *particular* possibilities ; viz. a possibility of the assumed event's being present, and an equal possibility of its not being present, at the given time. And in this case, there is always a particular *certainty*, but no particular *necessity*, relative to the assumed event. For whenever there are two equal possibilities, with respect to any one future event ; then it is always the case, that one or the other of them ; that is, either the affirmative or the negative, is *now different* from what it *will be*, when the given future time, to which they now both relate, comes to be *actually present*. And *that* one, which is now different from what it will be, is what we call *contingence* ; and therefore it implies a particular *certainty*, relative to the future event, to which it relates. And respecting the two equal possibilities ; if the affirmative, for instance, is now different from what it will be ; then it implies negative certainty ; that is, the *possibility* of the event's being present, implies a *certainty* of its not being present. But if the negative possibility

is now different from what it will be ; then it implies affirmative certainty ; that is, the possibility of the event's not being present, in the given future time, implies a certainty of its being present, at that time. This is evident, from the nature of the case. For if the possibility of the event's *not* being present, at the given time, is now *different* from what it *will be*, at that time ; then it is now *certain*, that there will, at the given time, be *no possibility* of the event's *not* being present ; and therefore, it is now certain, that the event will be present. Hence it is evident ; That there is such a thing as real *certainty*, which implies no *necessity*. Certain foreknowledge, therefore, in this case, has not the least degree of influence, nor does it imply any thing whatever, that has any influence, one way or the other, with regard to the event, to which the foreknowledge relates. It is so far from rendering any event necessary, or even *proving* the necessity of it, that, on the contrary, all necessity is, from the very nature of the case, intirely excluded. And consequently, the divine foreknowledge of future events, is of such a nature, as not to interfere, in any way whatever, with the most perfect liberty of moral agents.

3. Since, according to the original state of things, relative to future events, that belong to the mutable system, there are, as we have been observing, two equal possibilities, therefore there is a foundation for the Supreme Agent to EXERT HIS POWER, by remitting one of the two equal possibilities, and retaining the other..... And by such EXERTION he does, from time to time, remove original contingency, and introduce necessity : for whenever either of the two equal original possibilities is removed, then the one that remains, will become the same

as necessity. But he always has a perfect knowledge of every future event, even before he exerts his power, whereby it is rendered necessary, that the event itself should be actually introduced.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE DIVINE DECREES.

THE divine decrees are to be considered in a twofold view. First ; as they relate to the manner in which finite free agents are to regulate their conduct ; so that all evil may be prevented, and the greatest possible good may be effectually secured, with respect to all perceptive beings, who belong to the system of mutable existence. Secondly ; as they relate to the conduct of the Supreme Agent, in the prosecution of his own universal plan of operation, whereby, according to rules of the most perfect equity, he dispenses suitable rewards and punishments to those, who are under his absolute control, and who are strictly accountable to him for all their conduct. Hence it follows : That there are *two kinds* of decrees, which, in their respective natures, are intirely different from each other. Those of the first-kind, we shall, for the sake of distinction, denominate *moral*, and the other *efficient*. By a moral decree, then, is to be understood that, which respects the *manner*, in which those, to whom the decree relates, are to regulate their conduct ; and by an *efficient* decree is meant that, which has a connexion with any *effect*, necessarily resulting from the actual exertion of divine power.

Every divine decree implies a *necessity* of that, to which the decree relates. Hence there are *two kinds of necessity*; viz. moral and efficient. That, which we here denominate *efficient*, is the very same as what is commonly called *natural* necessity. And let it be particularly observed; That whenever, in the course of this work, we use the term, “necessity,” without any discriminating epithet, we always mean *efficient*, or *natural* necessity.

According to that order of things, which relates to the mutable system, the *moral* decrees of the Deity are *prior* to those of the *efficient* kind. For he first gives finite agents directions and commands, relative to the manner of their conducting, so as to secure his favourable regard; and then deals with them according to their obedience or transgression. Hence it is evident; That moral necessity precedes that which is efficient. And now, for the sake of illustrating the nature of a moral decree, we shall introduce the subject, by citing some passages of scripture. “For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation. So they established a DECREE, to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel, at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time, in such sort, as it was written. In the first year of Cyrus, the king, the same Cyrus, the king, made a DECREE, concerning the house of the Lord at Jerusalem: Let the house be builded, &c. Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth,

Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a DECREE, that in every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel : for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a DECREE from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the DECREES for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem." (2 Chron. xxx. 2....5. Ezra vi. 3. Dan. vi. 25. Luke ii. 1. Acts xvi. 4.)

According to the sense, in which the term, decree, is used, in the passages, that have now been cited, every moral command, that has been given by the Deity, is a decree. All the divine decrees, considered in this view, imply a *moral necessity* of obedience. For that, which is opposite to what is impossible, is necessary ; but according to the moral law, there is no possibility of transgression ; therefore, there is a moral necessity of obedience. All the moral decrees of the Deity, relate to *good*, and not to *evil*. And, consequently, if those decrees had never been violated ; then evil never would have existed. It is so far from being the case, that there was, in the original state of things, any moral necessity of evil, that on the contrary, there was a universal moral impossibility of it. For it is impossible, that there should be any evil, without transgression ; but it is impossible, that there should be any transgression, according to the moral law ; that is ; it is impossible that there should be any *lawful* transgression ; and therefore there is a moral impossibility of evil. There is, therefore, previous to a violation of the moral law, no kind of necessity of any kind of evil.

The reason is, because the Deity never forms any decree, that evil shall exist, till the moral law is actually violated. If you should say, That the Deity can, if he *sees fit*, introduce a necessity of evil, previous to there being any actual violation of the moral law: We answer: It is readily granted, that the Deity always has done, and for ever will do, just according as he *sees fit*; and in this glorious divine prerogative, all finite free agents ought for ever to rejoice. But then it must be considered, that it is not consistent for him to do any thing, but only what is *really fit* and proper to be done. But it is not really fit, that there should be any necessity of evil, previous to an actual transgression of the moral law; therefore the Deity has never seen fit to introduce any such previous necessity. For he, being the absolute and sovereign Lord of all the efficient necessity, that ever can be introduced into the mutable system, always introduces it, at the time, whenever it really becomes fit for him to introduce it. And whenever the moral law is actually violated; then, but never before, is the *proper time* for him to introduce the necessity of evil. It is evident, therefore, That every divine decree, considered in a *moral* view, is the same as a command, a law, or rule, which the Deity has instituted, and with infinite authority, has enforced, for the regulation of the moral conduct of finite free agents. And every decree of this kind is so far from implying any necessity of evil, that it is, on the contrary, as far as the nature of things will admit, directly calculated to prevent it. For if the moral decrees of the Deity had never been violated by those, for whose benefit they were originally formed, then no evil could ever have been introduced.

Having thus briefly stated, and illustrated, the doctrine of the divine decrees, considered in a *moral* view, as being contained in the moral law; and as being originally designed, by the supreme Legislator, for the immediate use and highest benefit of all finite intelligent beings, in the due regulation of their moral conduct, so that all evil might be prevented; we shall now proceed to consider the divine decrees, as they respect the Deity; and as being the irreversible result of his own universal law of operation; even that law, according to which he does, whenever the proper time arrives for that purpose, introduce that inflexible necessity, which involves the eternal destinies of finite agents, relative to their final happiness or misery.

The divine decrees, considered in this view; viz. the EFFICIENT decrees of the Almighty, are absolutely inviolable. And there is not, in the whole of the universal system of mutable or immutable existence, any opposing force, that ever can, in the least degree, retard or impede their execution, in its greatest possible extent..... "Wo unto him," therefore, "who striveth with his Maker. For he is JEHOVAH, and there is none else: there is no God besides him. He forms the light, and creates darkness: he makes peace and creates evil: it is the LORD who does all these things. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure." (Isa. xlv. 9, 5, 6, 7. Eph. i. 11. Isa. xlvi. 10.)

Utterly vain, therefore, is the imagination, that may be entertained by any one, of frustrating the efficient decrees of him, who, in the exercise of his uncontrollable power, "doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and

among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Who would set the briers and thorns against him in battle?..... He would go through them: he would burn them together. Therefore let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of no effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever: the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (Dan. iv. 35. Isa. xxvii. 4. Psal. xxxiii. 8....11.) Consequently, no human inventions nor devices, which are founded in falsehood, how artfully so ever they may be contrived, even by the most powerful among the children of men, will be able to withstand the all-conquering force of the efficient decrees of the Supreme, Omnipotent Agent; but will, by that, be swept away, as with an overflowing flood. "Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people, which is in Jerusalem..... Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come nigh unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall

not stand : and when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth, it shall take you : for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night : and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation, that shall come from far ? to whom will ye flee for help, and where will you leave your glory ? Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee ? I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it." (Is. xxviii. 14....19. x. 3. Ezek. xxii. 14.)

It must be evident to every one, who considers the subject with any degree of serious attention, that all the decrees, that result from the exertion of divine power, according to the universal law of divine operation ; or, in other terms expressive of the same idea ; all the divine decrees, which result from the will of the Deity, relative to his own conduct, imply a most strict and unalterable necessity ; a necessity, which is infinitely beyond the limits of any possibility to reverse ; and which, therefore, is as strong as Omnipotence itself. Hence we may see the vanity, absurdity, and horrid impiety of making the divine decrees a subject of contentious dispute. It becomes us to be still ; and know that God is God. By the preceding principles we are furnished with the clearest evidence, that there is a very great and essential distinction between the divine decrees, considered as relating to the conduct of finite intelligent beings, and considered, as relating to the conduct of the Deity, in his administration of the government of the universe. And this distinction is founded in the original state of things ; which implies the possibility of a mutable, as well as an immutable system of existence ; and therefore implies

the possibility of evil, as well as the possibility of good. For there never would have been any possibility of evil, if there had not been an original possibility of a mutable system; because in the universal immutable system of infinite and absolute perfection, which peculiarly and essentially belongs to the Deity, there is no such thing as any possibility of evil. But the case with respect to the mutable system is intirely different: for with relation to that, there was an original possibility of evil, and also an original possibility of good; and therefore there was no original necessity of evil. Hence it was perfectly consistent with the infinitely benevolent nature and glorious character of the supreme Lawgiver to form, and accordingly he did form, an absolute DECREE, extending to all finite free agents; requiring them, with all the authority, with which Omnipotence is invested, not to conduct in such a manner, as to open the way for the introduction of evil; that is, requiring them to have nothing to do with the possibility of it, but to leave that intirely to his disposal: That, whenever the proper time should arrive, he might, in perfect conformity to his own universal plan of operation, wholly remove it, and thus unalterably secure the original possibility of all good. But this moral decree, notwithstanding its being the best, that could possibly result, even from infinite goodness itself, and in the violation of which all moral evil consists, has, in a sad variety of instances, been so violated, as to be attended with the intire and absolute loss of the original possibility of all good, and the actual introduction of all natural evil; the continued existence of which, through endless duration, is now confirmed by a DECREE of a different kind, viz. a decree resulting from the law of divine op-

ration; a decree, which no power in heaven, earth or hell, can ever reverse. That the moral law, which has a peculiar relation to the conduct of finite free agents, can be violated, has been too often proved by a melancholy series of incontestable facts. But the law of divine operation, implying the *will* of the Deity, respecting his own conduct, always has been, and will for ever continue to be, absolutely inviolable. Therefore, the Deity never can be frustrated in the prosecution of his universal plan, relative to the exertion of his own power.—Consequently, whatever may be the final destiny of finite beings, his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. All the divine decrees are perfectly consistent with each other, and with the divine character. No reasonable objection, therefore, can ever be made against any thing's being exactly conformable to the divine decree. For it is impossible to conceive of any thing more inconsistent or more derogatory to the character of the Deity, than the supposition, that he has decreed any thing, and yet, that it is not right, that the thing itself should correspond to the decree.

The divine decrees are, as we have said, to be considered in a twofold view. First; as they relate to the conduct of finite free agents towards their Supreme Legislator. And secondly; as they relate to the conduct of the Supreme Legislator himself towards finite beings, considered as being at his absolute disposal, and subjects of his universal government. And since there was, in the original state of things, a possibility of the greatest good, as well as of the greatest evil, relative to the mutable system; and both of these amazing possibilities were at the absolute disposal of him, who held the uni-

versal balance of power ; it was therefore, perfectly consistent with the plan of his government, so to turn the scale, when the proper time for that purpose should arrive, as for ever to prevent the actual existence of evil, and therefore eternally secure the good ; by intirely remitting the possibility of the one, and retaining that of the other. To this end, therefore, he did, from the most pure benevolence, ordain a decree, strictly prohibiting all finite free agents from having any connexion with the possibility of evil ; and requiring them to let it wholly alone for him to dispose of, by removing it, whenever he should see fit, intirely out of the system. For, such is the very nature of a mutable system, including finite agents, that it is inconsistent that the whole, which is to be done by the exertion of divine power, should all be performed at once. Therefore, for the actual introduction of the whole, that possibility, in its utmost extent, will admit, a *certain order* and *succession* of TIME is indispensably required. Now since there was an original moral decree, that all finite intelligent beings should absolutely abstain from the possibility of evil ; therefore it was inconsistent with the character and essential perfections of the Deity to form an *original decree*, that evil should be actually introduced.

You will perhaps inquire ; Whether the Deity had not power, *if he had seen fit*, to form a decree, that evil should exist ? We answer ; That he certainly had such a power. For he always has done, does now, and for ever will do, whatever he *sees fit* to do. Since he is invested with all the power, that there is in the whole of the universal system, and is absolute Lord, even of necessity itself ; therefore he worketh all things after the

counsel of his own will. But then it is certain, notwithstanding this, that he does *not see fit* to exert all his power at once; for he has a whole eternity....an endless series of *successive times*, in which to perform his operations. And therefore; though he had a power to have formed a decree, *if he had seen fit*, that evil should actually exist; yet he never *did see fit* to form such a decree, till the *proper time* actually arrived, when it *really became fit*, that such a decree should be formed. For if the original moral decree, absolutely prohibiting all finite free agents from having any connexion with the possibility of evil, had never been violated; or which is the same, if moral evil had never taken place; then the *Deity never would have seen fit* to form any decree, that natural evil should exist.

There are two efficient decrees, which extend through endless duration, and which, therefore, involve the eternal destinies of the perceptive beings to whom they respectively relate. For, since moral evil, in its greatest possible extent, consisting in a transgression of the law, and a final rejection of the gospel, has, in some instances, actually taken place; therefore the Deity has seen fit to form an unalterable decree, that natural evil shall actually exist; and that it shall, without any intermission, or mitigation, continue for ever. This decree is the result of the law of divine operation, which relates to the conduct of the Deity towards those, who are absolutely dependent on his Omnipotent power, and are the subjects of his uncontrollable government. This decree was never formed, till the moral law was actually violated; but having been once formed, it is now as firm, and as lasting, as the divine existence. And it is to be observed: That there

is another decree, which is perfectly distinct from the one last mentioned; viz. that, by which the eternal happiness of the finite being, in whose favour the decree is formed, is unalterably secured to every one, who, by the exercise of a practical faith, is actually united to the glorious Mediator. A union of this kind, is of such a nature, that when it is once formed, it is absolutely indissoluble. Hence it is most strictly and literally true, respecting any one, who is the subject of this union; "That neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.".... (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) Hence it is evident: That there is one decree of the moral kind, which was originally ordained for the purpose of regulating the conduct of all finite free agents, in such a manner, that natural evil might never be introduced into the system. And this is that, which was implied in the moral law. There are two other decrees, which are of an intirely different nature; both of which result from the law of divine operation, and relate to the final and eternal destinies of finite free agents. And these two last were not formed, in the original state of things, relative to the mutable system; for, in that original state, there was a universal balance of power in the hand of the Supreme Agent; implying a possibility of infinite happiness, on one side, and a possibility of infinite misery, on the other. The Deity continues to hold this balance, till the proper time arrives for him to turn the scale. And his actually turning the scale, by remitting the possibility on one side, and retaining it

on the other, is the very same as his forming a decree, by which the final state of individuals, with respect to a future eternity, is unalterably decided.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE DIVINE ECONOMY OF REDEMPTION.

IN the universal system, there is ONE thing of such a nature as to imply THREE: which THREE have such a relation to the ONE, and to each other, as to require a certain order of arrangement, and are, therefore, denominated, "THE FIRST," "THE SECOND," and "THE THIRD." And by the ONE, which implies THREE, is to be understood the whole infinite sum of all that is really valuable and truly excellent; it is therefore, in the very nature of it, of boundless extent; because it extends to all that is valuable, throughout the whole universal system. It is what has been from eternity. It is without beginning; and, absolutely considered, it is without end. It is to be loved with a supreme love. This ONE, since it is originally infinite, admits of no increase; because it already includes all possible value. There never can, therefore, be any new value, in addition to what there is now, and always has been. And this ONE, considered absolutely, in the whole of its infinite extent, never can admit of any, not even the least, diminution. But though this is the case; yet there are, notwithstanding all this, particular instances, relative to *finite* existences, in which that very same value, which is included in the ONE, in which all real value is contained, may be finally and irre-

coverably lost. And it not only *may*, but it certainly *will*, be lost; unless the *actual securing* of it, while it may be secured, is effectually attended to, with suitable and seasonable care. Though it cannot be lost, considered *absolutely in itself*; yet it may be lost, *in respect to individuals*, who belong to *the mutable system*.

As a proof and illustration of what has now been observed; we shall suppose the following to be the true statement of a real fact. For since there are such numerous instances, in which the statement will particularly apply, we may safely admit it, without any danger of error. The statement, then, is this; You are in an unconfirmed state. The irreversible decree, relative to the particular mode of your existence through endless futurity, has not yet been actually formed. The Deity, therefore, is holding a balance of power; on one side of which hangs suspended your eternal happiness; and on the other, your eternal misery. This being the case, the whole infinite sum of all that is valuable, in the universal system, is, *in respect to you, in particular*, every moment liable to be eternally lost. You are now in a state of natural liberty, of being for ever happy, or for ever miserable; being enabled, by the twofold power of the Deity, to take either side. You must not, however, even once suppose, that your liberty is such, that you can say; You will have nothing to do in the affair, one way or the other. For it has now become all too late, ever to admit any supposition of this kind. Had you never been introduced into a state of existence; then, indeed, you would have had nothing to do; but the case is *now* essentially altered. It is an incontestible fact, that you *do* exist..... And, according to what has just been stated, the Deity

is now invested with a twofold power, which has a special relation to you in particular ; and you must, even within a very short time, take one side or the other. For this, considered in a general view, is already determined, and fixed by an irrevocable decree, as firm as the great Jehovah's eternal throne. Here, then, a most interesting object presents itself to view ; an object, which, unless you are totally devoid of all sensibility, must rouse your attention to the highest degree. The infinite sum of all that is valuable, in the whole of the universal system, is, *in respect to you*, continually liable to be eternally lost ; and this infinite good, being once lost, you yourself will be utterly lost for ever ; even so lost, as to be involved in a state, infinitely worse than that of nonexistence.

“ Oh, wretched state of deep despair,
“ To see” your “ God remove,
“ And fix” your “ doleful station where”
You CANNOT “ taste his love.”

WATTS.

Having explained, in general, what is to be understood by THE ONE, which implies THREE ; we shall next proceed to take a brief view of THE THREE, that are implied in ONE. According to that order, which belongs to what is really valuable, there are *three* implied in *one* ; which *three* we shall, for reasons hereafter to be more particularly explained, denominate, Preferability, Practical Possibility, and Consequential Necessity. With regard to any proposition or principle, the grand inquiry is, Whether the principle itself is of any value ? If it is of no value ; then it is worthy of no regard ; but if the principle itself is really valuable ; then there are three special objects of regard. First ; there is a preferability of

its being true, to its not being true. Secondly ; there is a practical possibility of its being true. Thirdly ; there is a consequential necessity of its being true. Let us take the following principle : viz. The Deity is the boundless source of life and happiness, to all perceptive beings who are capable of being happy. That this principle is valuable, even infinitely valuable, is, at first view, irresistibly evident ; it is, therefore, worthy of supreme regard. Admitting this one thing : That the principle itself is valuable, you must admit THREE things with relation to it, all which are of the very *same* value :

First : That its being true, is more valuable than its not being true. Secondly : That there is a present possibility of its being true. Thirdly : That there is a future necessity of its being true.

This principle's being true, is of infinitely greater value than its not being true ; and this infinitely greater value, is what we call, Preferability. That *possibility* of the principle's being true, which is of such a nature that it can be *exchanged* for the *necessity* of its being true, is what we call, Practical Possibility. And by what we call Consequential Necessity, is meant, that necessity, which will be introduced in *consequence* of the *removal* of practical possibility.

Practical possibility is to be removed by volition of that kind, which we call special volition ; and for the production of this kind of volition, special Divine Agency is always required. Though Divine Agency is exercised in the production of every effect, that ever takes place, yet it is in the production of special volition, that special Divine Agency is peculiarly exerted. It is this kind of Divine Agency, and this alone, which so turns the scale,

as to prevent eternal misery, and secure eternal happiness. Now the question is, not whether you have experienced the operation of Divine agency of any kind? for it is certain, that you have in ten thousand times ten thousand instances; but the grand question is, Whether there has, with relation to you, ever been any Divine Agency of such a kind, and in such a degree, as to actually fix your eternal state on the favourable side? If this never has in fact been the case, then it must be soon, or it is certain, that you will unavoidably be miserable for ever.

In order to illustrate the preceding doctrine, respecting the three special objects, requiring supreme regard, we shall introduce a particular case, by supposing; That the Deity is now invested with a twofold power relative to *your* future happiness and misery. And consequently, that since he is still holding the balance, he has not yet actually turned the scale, and therefore has not yet determined your final state. This being the case, you are now absolutely in the hands of that Omnipotent Being, whose power is soon to be exerted in disposing of you for eternity; by assigning you a place, either in the happy mansions of endless bliss; or in the dreary regions of interminable wo; just according to the side, on which you will be, at that decisive moment, when the solemn crisis, now swiftly advancing, actually arrives, in which the scale is to be finally turned; and the balance never to be restored any more. Such is now your situation....and a most awfully critical situation indeed it is! Now the grand inquiry is, What is to be done? for a serious business is now before you.... a business of the most interesting nature, and which

urgently demands the most speedy dispatch. Here you stand in absolute need of the special Agency of the Deity; who, while he is holding the balance of power, not having yet turned the scale, so as to have determined your final state, is continually calling upon you, in a most kind and benevolent voice, saying; "Turn you at my reproof, behold I will pour out my spirit upon you." (Prov. i. 23.) Therefore, in order that you may become the happy subject of that special Divine Agency, by which alone the saving influence of the Holy Spirit can be communicated, you must turn your attention to, and view with the utmost seriousness, impartiality, and candour, the three glorious Objects of special regard, in the grand economy of Redemption. And here you will find what is peculiarly suited to your particular case; and not to yours only, but also what is of infinite extent, and perfectly suited to the case of all, throughout the universal system, who are capable of happiness. We say...."all who are capable of happiness"....because, those who, with Belshazzar, have been weighed in the balance, and found wanting, and against whom the scale has *already* been turned, are, from the very nature of their case, for ever excluded from having any thing to do in this all important affair. But, with respect to *you*, it has not yet become too late to proclaim; "Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Therefore hear and attend. "For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life." But you must remember; "The time is short." (2 Cor. vi. 2. Deut. xxxii. 47. 1 Cor. vii. 29.) Life and death are now set before you. The first inquiry, therefore, which, in the universal order of things, in the moral system, or that which has a pe-

culiar relation to moral agents, is, Whether life is *preferable* to death? Or, in other terms of the same import; Whether your being finally and eternally happy, in the full enjoyment of the Blessed God, is really preferable to your being finally and eternally miserable, in a state of total banishment from his happifying presence? That the true answer to this inquiry is on the affirmative side, is very evident. And it is indeed so evident, that it may, perhaps, be thought strange, that an inquiry, so plain, should be proposed. But it is to be observed, that the plainest truth is too often passed by, without due attention to its nature and importance, and without making that improvement of it, which ought to be made. That your being finally happy is *preferable* to your being finally miserable, is now most certainly true. And in this truth, consists what we call, Preferability. And this, according to the order of things, in the moral system, and particularly in the divine economy of Redemption, is the first of the three Objects of special regard. That your being happy, is preferable to your being miserable, is something, which, whenever you think of it, you must necessarily believe; and, so far, you do right. But, though this principle is really true, and though you may have a full belief of it; yet this, in itself, alone, notwithstanding its being most important, in its proper place, will not be of the least avail, with respect to your final happiness; and, therefore, will be no SECURITY against your final misery. And since this is the case, you stand in absolute need of some *other* principle, together with the one, that has already been mentioned; and such a principle there actually is. For if it is admitted, That your being happy is *preferable* to your being miserable;

then it will follow, as a direct and immediate consequence, That your being happy is actually *possible*.

Thus we have brought into view, two objects of special regard ; the first of which is Preferability. This is the grand object of choice or preference. The second, and that which immediately results from the first, is Practical Possibility. And we give it this denomination, because it is a Possibility of a peculiar nature ; being the Object....even the direct and only Object of all practical belief. It will not follow, however, from either, nor from both, of these Truths, that your final happiness is actually *secure*. To *secure* your final happiness, therefore, you stand in absolute need of *another* Truth, distinct from those two, which are now present. And this Third Truth, or Third Object of special regard, is that, by which your eternal salvation is to be *sealed* or *confirmed* ; we have, therefore, given it the denomination of Consequential Necessity. For it is not sufficient, that there should be merely a *possibility* of your salvation ; but there must be a *necessity* ; that is, an absolute *confirmation*, or infallible *security* of it ; otherwise, it is in continual danger of being irrecoverably and eternally lost..... Those, that have now been mentioned, are the THREE Objects of supreme regard, in the economy of Redemption.

The Third, which, according to the order of things, in the Divine Nature, proceeds from the First and Second, has such a relation to them, that it stands ready, (if we may be allowed to use such a figurative expression,) to be actually present, whenever *the way is prepared* for its being introduced. And the only way, in which preparation ever can be made, for the introduction of the Third,

is by removing the Second ; that is, the Second must be GIVEN UP, in EXCHANGE for the Third. And the Third, when it is actually introduced, takes the the place of, and becomes the same as, the Second, in a renewed state..... Therefore, the Second, both in its *original*, and in its *renewed* state, has an immediate relation to the First. And the Third, which proceeds from the First and the Second, has a relation to both ; being ever ready to take the place of the Second, and thus be introduced to an immediate relation to the First, whenever the Second is removed. And whenever this infinitely important exchange is made, then, what we call, for the sake of distinction, “ the special Agency of the Deity,” is always employed.

Having given a general statement ; let us now take a review of the observations that have been made, respecting the the universal ORDER of things in the DIVINE NATURE, especially as it relates to all finite beings, who are capable of being made for ever happy, in the complete enjoyment of the Deity ; but yet are, at the same time, continually liable to be for ever perfectly miserable, by being introduced into a state of total and eternal banishment from his happifying presence. Now, what is that, which is truly worthy of special regard, love, or esteem ? Certainly it is that, which is really VALUABLE or important. Take, then, the whole absolute sum of all that is really excellent, valuable, or important, in the universal system, and you will have an Object, which is truly worthy of supreme regard....truly worthy of infinite love. This One most glorious Object of supreme regard, is essential, or it is what necessarily belongs, to the Divine Nature. And, from the very definition of it, the consequence will inevitably follow ; That this One Object,

consisting in the absolute sum of all that is valuable, in the whole of the universal system, is truly worthy of the highest honour, reverence, adoration, and complacential love. Though the value of some things, in particular cases, may, in consequence of its not being seasonably *secured*, be finally and irrecoverably lost; yet the universal sum of all that is truly valuable, *absolutely considered*, never can, thereby, be in the least degree diminished..... Your own soul, is now really valuable; more valuable than the whole world; and even more valuable than the whole material universe. And this value intirely consists, not in the essence of the soul itself, but in that adorable THREEFOLD RELATION, which the ever blessed Jehovah now sustains towards you, as an individual: viz. the relation of Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. For if this relation was once dissolved, your soul, instead of being valuable, would instantly become, and eternally continue to be, infinitely worse than nothing. This threefold divine relation, however, is not yet dissolved; and, therefore, your soul still retains its value. But this value of your soul, unless it has been already secured, by the effectual exercise of faith in the glorious Mediator, is every moment liable to be lost, beyond the possibility of recovery. Hence arises an inquiry of the most interesting and important nature; Where shall we find that glorious Mediator....the grand, the only Object of that kind of faith, by the exercise of which, the value of the soul, that is, its eternal happiness, can, before it becomes too late....before it is lost for ever, be effectually *secured*; so as to be as firm as the immutable felicity of the ever-blessed Jehovah? The answer to this, leads to the consideration of a subject, which strictly demands the most

devout attention ; and, if viewed, according to what the nature of it justly requires, must impress the mind with the deepest solemnity and reverential fear.

The universal system, considered in the whole of its possible extent ; that is, considered as extending to all possible existence, mutable as well as immutable, includes every thing, without exception ; and therefore includes all that is of no value, as well as all that is valuable..... Hence we cannot, consistently, rank all things under one common denomination. A distinction, therefore, must be made, between things of an opposite nature ; they cannot both be valuable. If any thing is really valuable ; then that, which is, in its nature, directly opposite to it, or inconsistent with it, is of no value. We must, therefore, make a distinction between right and wrong ; good and evil ; life and death ; happiness and misery. For if we confound things together, which are of an opposite nature, or invert their order, we shall incur the wo, denounced by the prophet. "Wo unto them, that call evil good, and good evil ; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." (Isa. v. 20.) Holiness and sin, are, in their own nature, directly opposite to each other : if holiness, therefore, is valuable ; then sin is of no value. Eternal happiness and eternal misery are directly opposite to, and inconsistent with, each other : if, therefore, eternal happiness is valuable ; then, eternal misery is of no value..... But here you may, perhaps, be ready to say ; That though eternal misery, considered in ITSELF, is of no value ; it being, in itself considered, infinitely worse than nothing, yet it may be attended with some valuable CONSEQUENCES, sufficiently great to counterbalance all the evil, con-

tained in eternal misery ; and even so much more than counterbalance, as to render it, on the whole, *necessary* and *desirable*, that the *evil*, though in itself, infinitely great, should actually take place, for the sake of the *good*, which could not *possibly, in any other way*, ever be introduced. Therefore, all things without exception, are, on the whole, good and valuable, either, as considered in themselves, or in their direct or occasional consequences ; and therefore, sin and eternal misery, though in themselves the greatest evils, yet considered, as being the necessary means of an overbalancing good, are valuable things..... Consequently there is no foundation for that distinction, whereby some things are denominated valuable, and others, things of no value : because all things are, ON THE WHOLE, good and valuable. As a brief, but yet decisive answer, to what is here stated as an objection to the leading principles, that have been advanced in the preceding pages, let it be carefully considered, with a serious and practical attention, disengaged from any refined system of mere speculation ; That eternal misery, in its own essential nature, is such, that it never will, and never can, be attended with *any consequence whatever*, distinct from itself, either good or bad ; because it is, in itself, an *ultimate consequence*. It is the last, the final result of sin. It is the evil fruit of a corrupt tree. “A corrupt tree CANNOT bring forth GOOD FRUIT.” (Math. vii. 18.) And unpardoned sin, persisted in through the whole of this present probationary state, this accepted time, this day of salvation ; or, sin persisted in till it becomes absolutely unpardonable, is a tree, or rather the branch of a tree, so totally corrupt, that it never can produce, nor be

improved as the means or occasion of producing, any fruit, but what is evil, only evil, and that continually.

We shall now return from what may be considered, as being, in some measure, a digression from what is of a practical nature, to a more particular consideration of the interesting subject, which has already been brought into view. In the first place, then, take the absolute sum of all that is truly valuable in the whole of the universal system, with relation to time and eternity. And then you will have One absolute Object, infinitely worthy of your supreme regard; infinitely worthy to be "loved with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind." (Matth. xxii. 37.) You will find, upon examination, that this One absolute sum and source of all possible value is essential to the Divine Nature, and is inseparable from the very existence of the Deity. Can you, with respect to this, entertain the least degree of doubt? If so; then, that you may have a view of the horrid and impious nature of such a doubt, suppose (if you can, for a moment, admit the dreadful supposition) that the absolute sum of all that is valuable, in the whole of the universal system, was to be removed, or annihilated.... Where then would be infinite perfection! Where would be that glorious Being, who justly claims supreme respect, love, and obedience from all the inhabitants of heaven and earth! In the One, absolute sum of all, which is valuable, is essentially implied a certain *order* of things; viz. a First, Second, and Third. It has been already observed; That all things in the universal system, containing all that relates to mutable and immutable existence, are not to be confounded together, and ranked under one common denomination. A distinction, therefore, must be made be-

tween what is valuable, and what is of no value. It is in that, which is VALUABLE, and in that alone, that we shall find that ORDER of things, which has been mentioned. Now since the Divine Nature essentially contains the whole sum and source of all that is truly valuable; to the Divine Nature, therefore, essentially belongs a certain *order* of things.

The first thing, in the divine order of things; or in other words, the first truth, in the order of truth, as it subsists in the Divine Nature, is the truth of the principle; That all, which is valuable, is preferable to its opposite. This principle is universally true; and that we may, for the sake of convenience, express this truth by one single term, we call it *preferability*; a term derived directly from the term *preferable*. We may, indeed, make use of any other term to express this same truth, if due care is taken, to fix, with precision, the exact signification of the term, which is employed for that purpose. A variety of instances might easily be produced to exemplify this remark, if occasion required, or if this was a proper place for philological discussion. But this must be omitted for the present; since what is of more serious importance, now demands our immediate attention. If we admit; That any thing is *preferable* to its opposite; then it will universally follow, as a direct and immediate consequence; That the *same* thing is possible. Hence we have a second universal truth, in that order of truth, which subsists in, and essentially belongs to, the Divine Nature. This second divine truth is perfectly equal to the first; for it results directly from it, and has an immediate relation to it. It is, therefore, of the same value as the first, and consequently worthy of the same regard. As we call

that universal truth, which is first, according to the order, in which truth subsists in the Divine Nature, Preferability ; so, for a similar reason, we call the second universal truth, Possibility. The term, *possibility*, being derived from the term, *possible*, becomes a convenient term, by which to express this truth. But since this second universal truth is, in its nature, essentially distinct from all common possibility, it is, therefore, of importance, that this distinction should be marked by some peculiar epithet ; we therefore denominate it *practical possibility*. And the reason for selecting the epithet, *practical*, is because the possibility, to which it is applied, is the direct and only object of that peculiar kind of *belief*, which is denominated *practical faith*. For it is by the exercise of this kind of faith alone, that the eternal happiness of dependent beings, in a probationary state, can be secured ; and their eternal misery prevented. To this second universal divine truth is appropriated the title of Mediator ; and the titles, Redeemer, Saviour, &c. are also frequently used ; all which have precisely the same signification, in the economy of Redemption.

Having introduced to view, two universal Truths relative to the One absolute sum of all that is valuable ; we shall now proceed to observe ; That from these Two proceeds a Third, which Third is intirely distinct from the First and the Second. For the First and Second are *both present* ; but the *Third* is *future*. The First and Second pervade immensity : but the Third inhabits eternity ; extending forward through boundless futurity. And since it extends through a whole eternity ; therefore, from this One eternal truth, or (in the language of sacred scripture) this One eternal Spirit, new vital influences, through

endless duration, may be continually derived to support the life and happiness of all finite beings, who are capable of being happy. While, on the other hand, all those, who have once passed through the probationary state, which is allotted them in the first stage of their existence, and have finally closed their eyes on the light of the present world, without having previously experienced an effectual renovation of heart, by the life-giving light, and the sanctifying energy of Divine Truth, will, not by any arbitrary power, but from the peculiar nature of their case, be for ever excluded from all possibility of ever receiving any of those happifying influences. For they will be intirely forsaken by the Redeemer....*the possibility of all life and happiness*: and left absolutely alone with the destroyer....*the original principle of all evil*. The two final sentences; “Come ye blessed”.....and, “Depart, ye cursed”.....are, each of them, after having once been pronounced, absolutely and eternally irreversible. For a union with either of the two original principles, viz. that of infinite good, or that of infinite evil, having once been formed, can never be dissolved. Those, who are united to the former, will for ever retain a principle of life; but all who join with the latter, so as to form a fixed agreement on that side will be totally abandoned by the principle of all life and happiness, and for ever subjected to the absolute predominant and continually increasing influence of the original principle of all evil....*the principle of eternal death*. From the preceding observations it is evident; That there is essentially inherent, in the Divine Nature, One absolute, immutable, and eternal sum of all that is valuable. This absolute One, from its very nature, is infinitely worthy of all love, honour, praise, rev-

erence, and adoration. This absolute One does, in the very nature of it, imply Three ; to which Three a certain distinct Order essentially belongs, viz. That of First, Second and Third. And since these Three are, in respect to their value, all perfectly one and the same ; therefore each of them is equally and infinitely worthy of the same supreme regard.

Since the very design of language is to introduce and communicate ideas ; therefore, if we wish to receive and retain fixed and determinate ideas of the Three glorious subsistences, which essentially belong to the Divine Nature, we must designate them by certain names. And that the names, which we have used for this purpose are not insignificant nor arbitrary, you may be convinced, by paying a serious and candid attention to the following exemplification of the important subject, on which we have been treating.

Let us assume the principle ; That there is one living and true God, who is the infinite sum and source of life and happiness to all, who are capable of being happy. This principle, you will readily grant, to be very important and very interesting, if there is a *possibility* of its being true. But you must consider ; That the first inquiry, respecting this principle, is not, Whether there is a *possibility* of its being true ? But the first inquiry is, Whether its being true is *preferable* to its not being true. If you admit ; That there is such a *preferability* ; then it will follow, as a direct consequence, That there is a *possibility*, of its being true. There is something very interesting in the consideration, that there is a *possibility* of your having the infinite source of all good for your boundless and never-failing portion. But then, it still

remains to be inquired ; Have you any *security* of this inestimable treasure ? has it ever been actually *confirmed* to you, so that there is no danger of your losing it ? The *security* or *confirmation* of the infinite good is what we have called consequential necessity.

The terms that have been used for the purpose of denoting the peculiar properties and distinct order of the Three universal truths, subsisting in the Divine Nature, are not designed to exclude others from being appropriated to the same use. And, indeed, other terms are frequently used to express the Three divine Subsistences. Thus, the First is often called, the Father ; the Second, the Son, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Saviour, &c. the Third, the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, the Comforter, &c. But it should be carefully considered, and always kept in view ; That, not the shape or sound of words, in themselves considered, but the realities, they are designed to express, are to be regarded.

That the preceding doctrine of the Three divine Subsistences or (as it is commonly called) the doctrine of the Trinity, is not a mere useless speculation, but that it is of a most interesting nature, and of the greatest practical importance, will evidently appear by duly considering the special application, which is to be made of it, in all cases, to which it will particularly apply. And it is a doctrine, which admits of the highest and most direct *practical improvement* by all beings, who, having already become heirs of eternity, have the twofold capacity of being for ever happy in the full enjoyment of the ever blessed God ; and of being for ever miserable, by a final and intire exclusion from his happifying présence. For the purpose of proving and illustrating this infinitely impor-

tant remark, we shall make a particular address to one of that class, which has now been described. You actually have a soul, which has begun, but will never cease to exist. The truth of this principle is already fixed, by a decree of the Almighty, as firm as his own existence. With relation to this soul of yours, there is now, in the hand of the Supreme, Omnipotent Agent, a balance of power; on one side of which is suspended your endless happiness, and on the other, your endless misery. One side or the other you must unavoidably take. Life and death are set before you; and you now have a natural liberty to take either side. That same Omnipotent Being, who has already determined your general state of being for ever happy or miserable, and who now holds the balance, by which you are kept suspended between the two extremes, will shortly turn the scale, for eternity; by remitting his whole power relative to your particular state, on one side, and retaining it, on the other. And hence will inevitably result your final transition into *one* of those inexpressibly awful extremes, in *which one*, whatever it may be, you must always remain. For the eternal scale, having been, by the exertion of divine power, once turned, can never be reversed, as long as eternity itself endures. Consider then.....seriously consider, what is before you. You now stand in the utmost need of a practical knowledge of the One absolute, and the Three relative Objects of supreme regard. And in the Divine Nature, is contained, as we have said, the absolute sum of all that is valuable in the whole of the universal system. Hence the following principle is of all other principles the most important; viz. That there is One only living and true God, who is the infinite source of life.

and happiness to all beings in the universe, that are capable of being happy. In this One principle is contained the whole sum of all that is valuable. In the complete enjoyment of this, the whole happiness of the Deity intirely consists; or in other words, the whole happiness of the Deity intirely consists in the complete enjoyment of himself with all his glorious perfections. And *your* whole happiness, if you should be finally happy, will consist in the very same, that is, in the enjoyment of the Deity; for he is the only source of all true happiness.

It must, however, be observed; That though this One sum of all that is valuable is, in respect to the Deity himself, absolutely SECURE, yet *in respect to you*, it is, every moment, liable to be for ever lost. For only let natural death, to which you are continually exposed, arrest you, in your present situation; and then all, that is valuable in the whole universal system.....all from which results the happiness of the Deity, will be intirely lost to *you*, and lost for ever. But this infinite good is not yet actually lost. And this being the case, its being secured is now preferable to its being finally lost: therefore, from this *preferability*, directly and immediately results the *possibility* of its being so effectually secured as to become as firm and immoveable as the existence and the happiness of the Deity. The real state of the case, then, is this; There is in the divine nature, an infinite good, consisting in the whole sum of all that is valuable in the universal system. And with respect to this infinite good three things are to be distinctly considered. First; That its being effectually secured is PREFERABLE to its being finally lost. Secondly; That there is a POSSIBILITY of its being effectually secured. Thirdly; That there is

the ACTUAL SECURITY of it, which REMAINS to be introduced. The two first of these three things are now actually *present*; but the third is *future*. The infinite sum of all that is valuable, therefore, is, in respect to you, continually liable to be eternally lost, notwithstanding there being the actual *possibility* of its being effectually secured. For the possibility itself, in its original state, does not afford the least degree of *actual security*. But, if the possibility of securing this infinite good, does not secure it, how then, you will ask, is it ever to be actually secured? We answer; There is one way, and but only one. The possibility itself, which is NOW ACTUALLY PRESENT, must be removed; and this will open the way for the introduction of the security; or, what we have elsewhere called, Consequential Necessity.

For when this Consequential Necessity is once introduced by the special removal of the Practical Possibility; then that infinite good, which before was liable to be forever lost, will become eternally secure. And thus you will be entitled "to an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." (1 Pet. i. 4.) You will have the great Jehovah, as an infallibly sure, and completely satisfying portion. And according to the promise made to Abraham, (Gen. xv. 1.) he will be your shield, and your exceeding great reward. It is certain, that if that possibility, which is now present, and which has an immediate relation to the infinite good, which is to be secured, is once removed, *by the exercise of practical faith*; then that necessity, which is now future, and in which the actual confirmation of the infinite good essentially consists, will become present, and thus the infinite good itself will become secure, so that it never can

be lost ; it will then be as secure to you, as the happiness of the Deity is to himself. But then it must be considered, That whatever is not actually confirmed by necessity, even though there is ever so much possibility of its being confirmed, is liable to be lost. Therefore, with regard to that infinite good....the One absolute sum of all that is valuable, which is the only foundation of all your happiness, both temporal and eternal, though there is now a complete POSSIBILITY of its being unalterably confirmed ; yet since that SPECIAL NECESSITY, in which the *confirmation* of it wholly consists, has never yet been actually introduced, it still remains intirely unconfirmed. It is, therefore, continually liable to be for ever lost ; for if it should once be lost, it never can be recovered through endless duration. And should it be your unhappy lot to meet with this inconceivably dreadful loss, it will not reduce you to a state of annihilation, nor leave you in a state of indifference ; but it will be the endless source of your perfect and eternally increasing misery. It will be that, which will always feed the worm, that will never die ; and continually fan the fire, that never will be quenched.

Thus you may see the infinite need, in which you stand, of that special necessity, without the actual introduction of which, you are every moment exposed to fall into a state of irrecoverable ruin. In order that you may be secured against this tremendous danger, the practical possibility, which is now present, and which is the immediate object of all saving faith, must, by the exercise of such a faith, be removed ; in order to open the way for the special necessity, which is now future, to become actually present ; and by being present, to unalterably

confirm that infinite good, which, in respect to you, is otherwise continually liable to be lost for ever. And hence it is, that, to speak in figurative language, the Mediator must die, in order to open the way for your having a sure and never-failing title to life; a title, which, being once actually secured, will be as firm as the existence, the glorious perfections, and the immutable felicity of the eternal Jehovah. And such a title as this must soon....very soon, be actually secured; otherwise, that infinite good, which is the only foundation, on which your whole happiness intirely depends, will be utterly lost, beyond all possibility of recovery. And such a loss as this, should you once become the subject of it, will inevitably involve you in a state of misery, which language cannot descibe, and of which, even all those strong and most affecting metaphors, used for that purpose, in the sacred writings, can convey but a very imperfect conception; a conception falling infinitely short of the literal reality.

But if the One absolute sum of all that is valuable, was once secured to you; then you would have, as we have observed, a most sure title to life and happiness, as lasting as your immortal mind. But since this, at present, is not actually the case, you have now, therefore, no title to life of any kind, neither temporal nor eternal, but only what wholly depends on your fleeting, precarious breath. How awfully critical. then, is your case! If you have any degree of sensibility, or seriousness, you must be filled with amazement to think....“on what a slender thread hang everlasting things!” And should this slender thread be cut asunder, while you remain in your present situation; then, by this single stroke....this one event, of

which there is, every moment, the utmost danger, you would at once lose your ALL, for eternity !.... You would not, indeed, lose your own conscious existence ; but, what is infinitely worse, than even the utter loss (if that was possible) of that principle of perception, which now animates your mortal frame, you would lose the happyfying presence of its Almighty Author. And then you would have no God, to whom you could look for help ; no Mediator, to afford the least assistance ; and consequently, no comforting nor supporting influences of the blessed Spirit. And since this will most certainly be the unspeakably wretched condition of all, who are arrested by temporal death, previous to their having obtained a fixed principle of eternal life ; therefore presume not to censure the pious poet, as having drawn, respecting those of this character, a picture of too dark a shade.

“ Death ! ’tis a melancholy day
“ To those who have no God,
“ When the poor soul is forc’d away
“ To seek her last abode.

“ In vain, to heaven, she lifts her eyes ;
“ For guilt, a heavy chain,
“ Still drags her downwards, from the skies,
“ To darkness, fire, and pain.”

WATTS.

From what has been observed, you may see, that the doctrine, which has been under consideration, is of the highest and most interesting *practical importance*. And this doctrine has, in a wonderful manner, been exemplified by an extraordinary human being, who once appeared in our world ; whose birth, life, death, and resurrection, were attended with miraculous circumstances. This

person, in order to exhibit to the view of mankind, a sensible representation of the grand economy of redemption, and strongly interest their feelings in the doctrine to be illustrated, was SUBSTITUTED for the Second of the Three Objects of supreme regard in the sacred Trinity. And it is always the case, that whenever any one thing is *substituted* for another; then that, which is thus substituted, is to be considered as having all the properties of that, for which it is substituted. This is the very nature and design of substitution.

In the course of divine providence, in the several ages of the world, there has been, according to the account, transmitted to us, by the sacred writings, a great variety of instances, in which sensible objects have been made use of, for the purpose of representing and illustrating things of an intellectual and spiritual nature. The language of the sacred scripture, in many parts of it, is very highly figurative or metaphorical. This, however, does not, in any degree, impair the truth of it; because the things which are thus figuratively expressed, are, in reality, as great as they are represented to be; and in many cases, they are infinitely greater, than what can be described by language, even after its having arrived to the highest degree of improvement, which it is capable of receiving. But we shall not be liable to be led into any error of dangerous consequence, when sensible objects are used for the purpose of representing spiritual things, unless we take the sensible objects, in *themselves* considered, to be literally the same as the things they are designed to represent.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

Introduction.

THE principal objection, that ever has been, or ever can be raised, against the divine original of the scriptures, is that, which relates to the doctrine of the Trinity, and the economy of redemption through a Mediator..... This doctrine does, indeed, constitute the grand characteristical distinction between the sacred scriptures and all writings of mere human composition. And if it is a doctrine of the highest importance, as it certainly is, which is evident from the general view, that has already been exhibited, in the preceding chapter; then it cannot be invalidated by any objection whatever. From the importance of the doctrine, therefore, we may, independent of every objection, infer the reality of its being true.

For if there is a real importance of any doctrine's being true; then every objection against its being true, whatever plausible appearance the objection may assume, is absolutely false. A true objection, against any thing that is truly important, is as great a contradiction, as can possibly be conceived. It is the universal nature of that which is valuable, to be consistent; whatever is inconsistent, therefore, is of no value. Consequently, if the doctrine of eternal salvation, by faith in a Mediator, which it is the grand design of the sacred scriptures to exhibit to view, is of any importance to mankind, in their present state; then every objection against this doctrine, as being inconsistent, is without any foundation, and conse-

quently, the scriptures, which, by way of distinction, have been called *sacred*, are of divine original. Therefore, instead of entering into a train of speculative arguments, in order to refute particular objections, we shall consider the nature and importance of the leading doctrines contained in scripture; and thence infer the reality of their being true. If the doctrines themselves are valuable, then they are consistent; and if so, then all objections, against their being true, are false. The method, therefore, which we propose to pursue, is, to take a brief view of the doctrines, miracles, prophecies, and figurative language of scripture.

SECTION FIRST.

On the leading doctrines contained in scripture.

One of the leading doctrines, and that which is the foundation of all the rest, is; That there is one living and true God; That there is but **ONLY ONE**; and that he is a Being of infinite, immutable, and eternal **PERFECTION**. It is not, therefore, to be supposed, that the three Subsistences, which have been mentioned, (Chap. 12) are three conscious agents or three distinct intelligent beings; for this would be the same as to suppose, that there are three Gods, instead of one. But the three Subsistences are to be considered as being absolutely essential to the existence, the nature, and the perfection of the **ONE ONLY LIVING AND TRUE GOD**. They are not **PERSONAL AGENTS**, therefore; but they are **FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF ACTION**.

“Unto thee it was shown,” says Moses, in one of his addresses to the children of Israel, “that thou mightest know, that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. See now that I, even I, am he; and there is no God with me: I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. (Deut. iv. 35. vi. 4. xxxii. 39.) “O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims! thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the first and I am the last, and besides me there is no God. I am the Lord and there is none else; there is no God besides me.” (Isa. xxxvii. 16. xlv. 6. xlv. 5.) “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John xvii. 3.) “As concerning, therefore, the eating of those things, that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the word, and that there is no other God but one. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Cor. viii. 4. Eph. iv. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5.)

The scriptures also give a very sublime description of the glory, majesty, and power of God. “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.” (Exod. xv. 11.) “Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth, from day to day, his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen: his marvellous works among

all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens. Glory and honour are in his presence, strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. Bring an offering and come before him, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Fear before him all the earth; the world also shall be stable that it be not moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let many say among the nations, The Lord reigneth." (1 Chron. xvi. 23....31.) "The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun, unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." (Psal. l. 1....4.) "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. The heavens declare his righteousness and all the people see his glory. For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods." (Psal. xcvi. 1, 2, 3, 6.) "Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt

offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. To whom will ye liken God : or what likeness will ye compare unto him ?” (Isa. xl. 15.....18.) “ God is jealous and the Lord revengeth ; the Lord revengeth and is furious : the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries : and reserveth wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked : the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers : Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation ? and who can abide the fierceness of his anger ? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble ; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood will he make an utter end of the place thereof and darkness shall pursue his enemies.” (Nah. i. 2.....8.) “ God came from Teman, and the holy One from mount Paran, his glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light : and he had horns coming out of his hand : and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth ; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations : and the everlasting mountians were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow : his ways are everlasting.” (Hab. iii. 3.....6.)

The scriptures assert, in the most express terms, the glorious attributes of the Deity ; such as the following :

1. Blessedness; that is, complete and independent happiness : “ Who changed the truth of God into a lie” (says the apostle, speaking of the heathen nations) “ and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.” (Rom. i. 25.) “ According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. That thou keep this commandment, without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ : which in his times, he will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the Kings of kings, and Lord of lords : who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see : to whom be honour and power everlasting.” (1 Tim. i. 11. vi. 15.)

2. Eternity : “ The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever.” (Deut. xxxiii. 27. 1 Tim. i. xvii.)

3. Glory : “ The voice of the Lord is upon the waters : the God of glory thundereth : the Lord is upon many waters.” (Psal. xxix. 3.) “ And he” (that is, Stephen, addressing himself to the Jewish council) “ said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken : The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran ; and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land, which I shall show thee.” (Acts vii. 2, 3.)

4. Goodness : “ For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive : and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but One, that is God.” (Psal. lxxxvi. 5. Matth. xix. 17.)

5. Holiness : “ And the Lord spake unto Moses saying : Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them : Ye shall be holy ; for I the Lord your God am holy. There is none holy as the Lord : for there is none beside thee : neither is there any rock like our God. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy.” (Levit. xix. 1, 2. 1 Sam. ii. 2. John xvii. 11. Rev. xv. 4.)

6. Immortality : “ For this God is our God for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever. And the angel, which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there should be time no longer. And one of the four beasts (that is, one of the four living creatures, referring to Ezekiel’s vision) gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.” (Psal. xlviii. 14. Rev. v. 14. x. 6. xv. 7.)

7. Immutability : “ For I am the Lord, I change not. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above,

and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (Mal. iii. 6. Jam. i. 17.)

8. Incomprehensibility : " Canst thou by searching find out God ? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do ? deeper than hell, what canst thou know ? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised : and his greatness is unsearchable." (Job, xi. 7, 8, 9. Psal. cxlv. 3.)

9. Infinity : " But will God indeed dwell on earth ? Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded ! Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off ?" We also read of " the fullness of him who filleth all in all." (1 Kin. viii. 17. Jer. xxiii. 23. Eph i. 23.)

10. Justice : " And Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked ? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city ; wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place, for the fifty righteous that are therein ? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked ; that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? He is the rock, his work is perfect ; for all his ways are judgment : a God of truth, and without iniquity ; just and right is he. Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you : take heed and do it : for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us : for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he

doth: for we obeyed not his voice. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." (Gen. xviii. 23....25. Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Dan. ix. 14. Ezek. xviii. 25. Rev. xv. 3.)

11. Knowledge: "Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let no arrogancy come out of thy mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world. Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (1 Sam. ii. 3. Acts xv. 18. Ps. cxlvii. 5. Heb. iv. 13.)

12. Mercy: "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth. Therefore, also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rent your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. To the Lord our God belong mercies, and forgiveness, though

we have rebelled against him." (Exod. xxxiv. 6. Joel ii. 12, 13. 2 Cor. i. 3. Dan. ix. 9.)

13. Omnipresence : " Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there : If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea : even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord : do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Psal. cxxxix. 7.... 10. Jer. xxiii. 24.)

14. Omniscience : " The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (Prov. xv. 3. Job xlii. 2.)

15. Patience : Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (as some men count slackness) but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (Rom. xv. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 9.)

16. Power : God hath spoken once : twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God. Lord God, behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (Psal. lxii. 11. Jer. xxxii. 17.)

17. Righteousness : " The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee." (Psal. cxlv. 17. Dan. ix. 7.)

18. Sovereignty : “ For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward..... Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Deut. x. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 15.)

19. Truth : “ God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent ; hath he said, and shall he not do it ? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ? A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. Sanctify them through thy truth ; thy word is truth. The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King.” (Num. xxiii. 19. Deut. xxxii. 4. John xvii. 17. Jer. x. 10.)

20. Wisdom : “ Daniel answered and said : Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever : for wisdom and might are his. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.” (Dan. ii. 20. Jer. x. 12. Jude 24.)

From the passages that have been cited, together with numerous others, which will present themselves to the view of all, who, with due attention, peruse the sacred volume, it is evident, that the scriptures maintain, in the most express and indubitable terms, the doctrine of the existence and absolute perfection of one only living and true God. And we do not merely say ; That this doctrine, *if it is true*, is of the highest importance ; but we directly assert, That *its being true*, is of the highest

importance ; or that *its being true*, is infinitely PREFERABLE to its not being true ; and therefore, that nothing is inconsistent with its being true. For if any thing whatever is really inconsistent with the doctrine's being true ; then its being true is of no value or importance. But the doctrine, which is now under consideration, immediately relates to that, which does, in the very nature of it, essentially imply all, that is really valuable or important, in the universal system. For to say ; That a Being of infinite perfection is nothing, or is of no value, implies a direct contradiction in terms. Absolute perfection, implying universal, immutable, and eternal felicity, is something which is, in itself, infinitely valuable ; that is, it is infinitely valuable to the Deity, to whom it essentially belongs, whether it is, or is not, of any value to finite beings. For, the solution of the question : Whether the infinite sum of all possible good, which is essentially implied in the universal system of absolute perfection, and of which it is the peculiar property of the Deity to have the original possession, can be of any value to those, who belong to the mutable system, and who have not any original security of this infinite good ; intirely depends on another leading doctrine, which it is the grand design of the sacred scriptures to exhibit to view ; viz. the doctrine of a Mediator. Utterly unavailing is a belief in the doctrine of the existence of one God, without a practical belief in the doctrine of a Mediator between God and man.

The scriptures frequently mention Three distinct Objects of regard, as having a subsistence in the Divine Nature. These are denominated, the Father, the Son,

and the Holy Spirit. And these Three, since they are all of the same value and of the same importance, considered as being the proper Objects of our special regard, in the economy of Redemption, are said to be **ONE**. They are all implied in one and the same Being, and are all of the same Divine Nature. Therefore, the doctrine of Three special Objects of supreme regard, subsisting in the Divine Nature, does not imply, That there are Three distinct intelligent Beings. For it is a plain dictate of reason, and fully proved by scripture, that there is but only One infinite all-perfect Being....One universal, immutable, and eternal conscious Mind. But then the glorious and blessed nature of this **ONE** Being, is such, as to render him the proper Object of a threefold regard.... Let us call the whole sum of all that is valuable in the universal system, the **HEAVENLY TREASURE**. Then this heavenly treasure is something that essentially belongs to the Divine Nature, and it is that of which the Deity has an original, immutable, and eternal possession. It is this inestimable, this One boundless treasure, which, as it relates to all finite beings, who are capable of happiness, is the proper Object of a threefold supreme regard; that is; there are **THREE** distinct things, respecting it, which are to be brought into view; and each of them demands supreme regard.

First, the importance of its being secured in preference to its being finally and eternally lost.

Secondly, the practical possibility of its being secured.

Thirdly, the absolute impossibility of its being lost: That is, the actual security itself.

These Three infinitely interesting Objects, all belong to the Divine Nature; and each of them is, by the very

terms, made use of to express it, worthy of supreme regard. For it must be admitted ; That the heavenly treasure's being secured, in preference to its being finally lost, is an object of infinite importance, and therefore worthy of the supreme regard of all beings, who are capable of being happy. But if its being secured is preferable to its being lost ; then it follows as a direct and immediate consequence, that there is a POSSIBILITY of its being secured. These two grand Objects, that have now been mentioned, are both *present* ; there is a Third, which is of the same importance as the First and Second, which is *not present*, but is *future*, and *remains* to be introduced ; and *that is*, the impossibility of the heavenly treasure's being lost ; which is the same as the infallible confirmation of the infinite good.

Hence you may see, with respect to the adorable Deity, the one only living and true God, that such is his glorious nature, as to imply Three distinct objects, every one of which is equally and infinitely worthy of supreme regard. With respect to the Deity, there neither is, nor ever was, any possibility of evil : with respect to him, therefore, the heavenly treasure, which is implied in his blessed nature, always was, is now, and eternally will be, unalterably secure. But with respect to finite beings, who are capable of happiness, the case is intirely different. For, with respect to them, there is an original possibility of infinite evil, as well as a possibility of good. Therefore, the heavenly treasure, or the infinite sum of all good, is, previous to its being actually confirmed, continually liable to be eternally lost ; and in the loss of all good, infinite evil is necessarily implied. Hence arises a most interesting inquiry of the highest practical impor-

tance ; How is that infinite sum of all good, which is implied in the Divine Nature, to be so confirmed to those, who have not as yet been finally cut off from all happifying communications with the Deity, that it can never be lost, and so that the opposite infinite evil can never be introduced ? We answer : There is one, and but only one, way in which this can ever be done ; and that is, by REMOVING the original possibility, which has an immediate relation to the infinite good. This will open the way for the immediate introduction of a new possibility, by which, when it is once introduced, the infinite sum of all good will be unalterably confirmed to him, whoever he may be, in respect to whom, this all-important operation is performed. This new possibility, which is thus to be transmitted from the future to the present, is the eternal seal of that glorious inheritance, to which every true christian has a most sure and infallible title. The possibility, which is now present, does not, in its original state, imply any confirmation or security of the infinite good to which it relates. But this original possibility, being of the same value as the infinite good itself, is of such a nature, that it may be EXCHANGED for a NEW possibility : or which is the same, it may be RENEWED. And, in its renewed state, it will have an immediate relation to the infinite good, as before. And not only so, but it will be inconsistent with the possibility of infinite evil, and will, therefore, imply an unalterable confirmation of all that is valuable. Hence it is, that the heavenly treasure, to which every true christian is entitled, is represented as being procured by the death of the Mediator, and it is called, “ the purchased possession.” “ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to

God, by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will : that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation : in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the PURCHASED POSSESSION unto the praise of his glory." (Rom. v. 10. Eph. i. 11....14.)

That possibility, which is, in the divine nature, the second object of supreme regard, is the peculiar object of all practical faith : which is the foundation of that kind of exercise, which we call *special volition*. It is the nature of volition or desire, (which are here used as synonymous terms) to relate to the want of the thing desired ; that is, it is the nature of desire to produce the *want* of its object. Hence it is by the exercise of practical faith, that the *want* of the possibility, which immediately relates to the infinite sum of all good, is produced. In consequence of which want, a new possibility is transmitted from the future to the present, to supply the want of the one, that is removed : which new possibility, when it becomes present will have the same relation to the infinite sum of all good, as there was before, and will imply an absolute and eternal confirmation of the infinite good to which it relates. And here it is observable : That the removal of the original possibility of all good, and the consequent introduction of the new possibility, by which the infinite good is sealed or unalterably confirmed, are in

scripture represented by the DEATH and RESURRECTION of the Mediator. And it is the Holy Spirit which seals or confirms, unto all true christians the sum of all good, which is implied in the nature of the Deity. Since there is, in the original state of things, relative to the mutable system, a principle of infinite good and also a principle of infinite evil. Therefore in order that the original principle of evil may be DESTROYED, a new principle must be transmitted from the future to the present. But there is no way, in which this new principle can be introduced, but only in removing, by the exercise of practical faith, the original principle of good. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith, into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For, if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Elect,

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; grace unto you, and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us: having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, for to make in himself, of twain, one new man, so making peace; that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And came and preached to you who were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints,

and of the household of God. This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind : having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart ; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ : if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus : that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts ; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind ; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” (Rom. v. 1.....11. vi. 6, 1 Pet. i. 2.....5. Eph. ii. 10.....19. iv. 17, &c.)

In the passages, that have now been cited, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are, in express terms, repeatedly mentioned. And that the doctrine, relating to these Three glorious Objects of supreme regard, is not a matter of mere speculation, but that it is immediately interesting, in the highest degree, and of the greatest practical importance, is evident from an impartial view of the nature of the doctrine itself, as well as from the consideration, that it is the sum and substance of the whole, that the gospel contains. By expunging this doctrine from the bible, you will, at once, divest that sacred book of all its real worth and excellence. But perhaps you may be ready to say ; That even though you should intirely discard this doctrine, you might notwithstanding,

still retain a belief of the existence of one God. Let this be granted ; and then it may be inquired ; What practical use can ever be made of such a belief ? You believe in the existence of one God ; and what then ? What is the *naturé* of this God, who is the object of your belief ? You cannot choose him for your portion, while you deny that there is any thing in his nature ; really valuable and excellent ; so as to render him the proper object of your *choice*. You cannot look to him for any comfort or enjoyment while you deny, that there is any *possibility* of having access to him by faith and prayer. You cannot trust in him for safety, while you deny, that there is any foundation in his nature for his *securing* to you the possession of any good, or preventing your falling into a state of infinite evil.

You are made capable of enjoying happiness, even a happiness perfect in degree, and of endless duration. But according to the supposition, which we have admitted, for the sake of just taking a view of the horrid consequences, that attend it, there is no where in the universal system, not even in the divine nature, any object, suited to happify your soul. Or allowing that there is, in the Deity, the whole sum of all, that is valuable and excellent, even to an infinite degree ; yet there is no possibility of your having any access to this supreme good. But even granting, that there is such a possibility ; yet there is, at the same time, in the opposite scale, a possibility of your falling into a state of infinite evil ; and therefore a possibility of your for ever losing the whole sum of all good, and of being completely miserable through duration without end. And amidst all this sur-

rounding and impending *danger*, too great for language to express, or imagination to conceive, which every moment awaits you, there is no *security* to be any where found, in immensity, nor eternity. How unspeakably dreadful, then, is your situation, with all your belief in the existence of one God, while you deny those all-important properties of his nature, without which your existence is continually liable to be rendered infinitely worse than nothing ! For by denying, that is, practically denying (whatever you may admit in speculation) those peculiar properties of the Divine Nature, and continuing to deny them, only for a short time, you will, so far as it relates to yourself, effectually destroy the universal principle of all good ; in consequence of which nothing will remain, but an unalterable principle of evil, to take an intire and eternal possession of your soul. And, in this case, you will be utterly banished from all good, and consigned over to all evil ; you will absolutely lose your God ; even the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And when the Deity, as to his happifying presence, wholly withdraws himself from you, never more to return ; and while there is no one, in all his boundless dominion, to speak to you one comforting word, he will say, in his parting and final address ; “ This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me ; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood.” (Jer. xiii. 25.)

Hence you may see that there is, before the progressive state of things, in the mutable system, to which you belong, has arrived to this awful crisis, an infinite importance of your having a Saviour, to open the way for the introduction of an infallible SECURITY, against that tremendous consequence, which, without such security, most

certainly will, even within a very short time, inevitably follow. The whole foundation, which supports you, in the first stage of your existence, has already begun to be undermined, and is, every day, and every hour, fast advancing towards a final dissolution. If, therefore, you should not, before the foundation, which has supported you *in time past*, is wholly removed, lay up for yourself (to use the language of the apostle) “a good foundation against THE TIME TO COME, that you may lay hold on eternal life,” you must very soon meet with a most dreadful and irrecoverable fall. To prepare the way for your final ruin, nothing is required above the ordinary course of nature ; but, in order to prevent it, a special divine interposition is indispensibly requisite. And by this special divine interposition is meant, the effectual influence of the Holy Spirit. This effectual influence is the only confirming SEAL of that inheritance, which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and which is reserved in heaven, that is, subsists in the Divine Nature, for all true believers. It must be observed : That, as long as the principle of infinite evil remains, the heavenly treasure will, from the very nature of the case, be insecure, and, therefore, will be continually liable to be for ever lost. But the original principle of evil will always remain, till something, which is inconsistent with it, is actually introduced, so as to intirely *destroy* it. Now the original principle of good is (before the infinite good itself is intirely and for ever lost) something which is capable of being EXCHANGED for a NEW PRINCIPLE ; that is, it is capable of being REMOVED, so as to open the way for the introduction of a *new principle*. The NEW PRINCIPLE, thus introduced, in consequence of the RE-

MOVAL of the preceding one, is that, and that only, which will *destroy* the original principle of infinite evil. And hence it follows: That when the principle of infinite good falls to rise again, in a renewed state; that is, when it is exchanged for the new principle; then the principle of infinite evil (just as far as it relates to any individual, in favour of whom this divine operation is actually performed) will finally fall, to rise no more. And thus the new principle will unalterably *confirm* the infinite good, which before was liable to be lost. And therefore, the happy individual, who has a special interest in this all-important affair, will have the Deity himself, with all the peculiar properties of his nature, for his boundless and never-failing portion. Inexpressibly happy are all those, who have been the real subjects of this amazing change, whom God “hath made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: and hath delivered them from THE POWER OF DARKNESS, and hath translated them into the kingdom of his dear Son.” (Col. i. 12, 13.) Who is there that can spend a moment’s serious reflection on the interesting nature of this change, and yet feel indifferent whether he has actually experienced it or not? With respect to any, who are, and continue to be, of this character, it is certain, that they will shortly meet with an inexpressibly dreadful change in the opposite extreme.... For there is not only a way, in which the infinite sum of all good may, if it is seasonably done, be unalterably secured; but there is also a way, in which this infinite good, as it relates to finite imperfect beings, may be eternally lost. For in every instance, in which there is a possibility of infinite evil, and in many instances, this is a most serious and alarming fact, it follows, from the very nature of the

case, that there is NO SECURITY of any good, neither infinite nor finite. In this case, therefore, there is no true peace nor safety; but all good is continually liable to be lost, even irrecoverably lost for ever. For it implies a direct contradiction to suppose: That there ever can be the actual SECURITY of any good, before the original principle of infinite evil is absolutely destroyed. And there is no way, in the universal nature of things, in which this original principle ever can be exterminated, but only by giving up the Mediator, in exchange for the Holy Spirit. Hence we may see the indispensable necessity (to use the language of scripture) of the DEATH and RESURRECTION of the Mediator, in order to our being delivered from a state of *spiritual death*, and introduced into that of *eternal life*.

It has been shown, that, previous to the final loss of infinite good, as it relates to any one, who belongs to the mutable system, there is a way, in which something may be transmitted from the future to the present, which will have such a counteractive influence, as to intirely destroy the original principle of evil; in consequence of which, the infinite sum of all good will be unalterably confirmed. What this counteractive influence is, and how it is to be introduced, has been already explained. We shall, therefore, now proceed to observe: That, as long as the original principle of evil actually remains unremoved, there is continual danger of its being unalterably confirmed, by the introduction of something, which is intirely subversive of all good, and attended with infinite evil, as its necessary consequence. If you inquire, what this is? We answer; it is *falsehood*; viz. that falsehood, which belongs to all those, who, by transgressing the

law, and finally rejecting the gospel, have completely filled up the measure of their iniquities; or, in other words, it is that falsehood, which belongs to every finally impenitent sinner. And by a finally impenitent sinner, is meant any one, who is, by death, introduced into the eternal world, before the principle of evil, with respect to him, has been actually removed, by the counteractive influence of the Holy Spirit. And here it is worthy of special observation: That, if finite free agents, in strict obedience to the moral law, had never had any connexion with the original principal of evil; but had, according as they were expressly directed, referred that intirely to the management and disposal of the supreme universal Agent; then, no falsehood, and consequently no evil, would ever have been introduced. And therefore there would have still remained the same foundation, as there was, in the original state of things, for the intire and absolute removal of all possibility of evil. And in consequence of such a removal, the infinite sum of all good, subsisting in the Divine Nature, would have been unalterably confirmed to all finite perceptive beings, as well as to the Deity himself. And therefore the mutable system, though it would still have been capable of being continually enlarged, by the vital energy of the Holy Spirit, whose influence extends through all futurity; yet amidst all its new degrees of endless, progressive improvement, would have perfectly harmonized with the immutable system of infinite perfection; in this case, therefore, there would have been the whole sum of all possible good, without any evil. But it is now for ever too late to admit, in its original extent, this agreeable supposition; because, by the introduction of sin, and the consequent ac-

tual existence of natural evil, it has now become, and will always continue to be, contrary to fact. For though the case, with regard to the immutable system of infinite perfection, and consequently, with regard to the Deity, considered in himself, is just the same as it would have been, if no evil had ever existed; yet the mutable system, as far as it respects some of the individual perceptive beings, who belong to it, has, by the final loss of that infinite good, which, according to the original constitution of things, might have been infallibly secured, and by the introduction of that infinite evil, which might have been wholly prevented, received an essential injury, beyond all possibility of any reparation. But if those individual perceptive beings, referred to, in the case that has been mentioned, have introduced no disorder into the immutable system of infinite perfection, and therefore have done no injury to the Deity, to whom that system peculiarly belongs; then why should he interfere, so as to punish them, for any thing they have done, in that mutable system, on which his existence and happiness has no dependence? We answer; Though they have not injured the Deity, in relation to *himself*; yet, as it relates to *them*, they have essentially injured him, even to an infinite degree, by intirely and eternally divesting him of all the adorable and infinitely amiable properties of his nature. For:

First; they cannot possibly chuse him for their happyfying portion. Because, by transgressing the moral law, and rejecting the gospel, they have opened the way for the introduction of that falsehood, by which the original principle of infinite evil has become unalterably confirmed; and therefore the infinite sum of all good,

which might have been for ever secured to them, is now totally destroyed, and irrecoverably lost. And consequently, there now remains nothing in the nature of the Deity, *as he relates to them*, that can ever render him the object of their choice.

Secondly; the Deity can never be the object of their desire. Because there is nothing in his nature, which *to them* can be desirable. There is no possibility of their having access to his favourable presence; for the principle of all good, having utterly forsaken them, nothing remains, but only the original principle of infinite evil. This is their final and eternal portion.

Thirdly; since the whole sum of all that is valuable in the universal system, is, *in respect to them*, finally lost, and there remains no possibility of its ever being recovered; therefore, they never can place any *trust* in the Deity for *safety*. In consequence of the infinite injury they have done to his nature and character, he is become *to them*, a God that *cannot save*. There is no place in immensity, and no period in eternity, that can afford them any safety, whereby they can ever be entitled to happiness or freed from misery. They have so injured the Deity, in his nature and character, as to render the state of things infinitely worse, *to them*, than if there was no God, and no existence in the universe.

There was, relative to the mutable system, as we have already observed, an original principle, which, though not evil in itself, yet was the foundation, without which evil could never have actually existed. There was a moral law, resulting from infinite benevolence, whereby all finite free agents were absolutely prohibited from forming any connexion with this original principle,

and were directed to leave it intirely with the Deity, for him to dispose of, that when the proper time should arrive, it might be wholly removed out of the system. But those wretched beings, whose case has been *mentioned*, for it infinitely exceeds the power of language to give an adequate *description* of it, have transgressed the law, relative to the original principle of evil. They have not indeed, taken this principle *out* of the hand of the Deity; but they have taken it *in* his hand; that is, they have taken hold of his power on the forbidden side. And by thus doing, they have opened the way for the introduction of that falsehood, which is inconsistent with the infinite sum of all good, *as it relates to them*; which falsehood therefore, by destroying infinite good, has actually introduced, and unalterably confirmed the existence of infinite evil. And therefore the original principle of evil, which, if they had let it intirely alone, could never have done them any harm, has now taken fast hold of them, and from its tremendous grasp, they can never escape. After a due consideration of what has now been observed, it will be impossible for you to doubt whether there can be such a thing as sin against God; or whether finite beings can be guilty of any sin that implies an infinite evil. Therefore, it is evident, That though the Deity, considered in himself, is absolutely unchangeable; yet, considered with relation to finite beings, there may be, in some cases, an intire change in his whole nature; viz. in the case of those, with respect to whom, in consequence of their transgression of the moral law, and rejection of the gospel, that falsehood, which is inconsistent with the infinite goodness of the divine nature, has been actually introduced.

And the divine nature, relatively considered, being once wholly divested of all goodness, will be infinitely changed, without any possibility of its ever being restored again, to its former state. And the case, with relation to those, in respect to whom, such an awful change has taken place, will be exactly the same, as if the Deity himself was, in reality, thus changed. The following example, though it will indeed fall infinitely short of the thing to be exemplified, may serve, notwithstanding, to confirm the truth of this observation. If your eyes were intirely put out ; then the case, with respect to you, in particular, as far as it relates to the light of the sun, would be exactly the same, as if the sun itself, that bright luminary in the heavens, was totally extinguished. Therefore, with regard to those individual perceptive beings, in respect to whom, all good is totally intercepted, by the intervention of falsehood, the case is just the same, as if the divine nature itself was intirely divested of all goodness. The case is just the same, as if there was no principle, in the universal system, but only that of evil, without any principle of good. Consequently those unhappy beings can have no intercourse nor connexion with those Three adorable Subsistences, which constitute the peculiar glory and excellency of the Divine Nature. They can have, in the Deity, no Father to be a fountain or source of happiness ; no Son to be a Redeemer to open a way for support or safety ; and no sanctifier to afford any security by the communication of any comforting, or vital influence. Previous to the awful crisis, when falsehood had confirmed the principle of infinite evil, there was, as the apostle has declared, a foundation “ for the remission of sins, that are past, through the forbear-

ance of God ;” but now, that foundation, being intirely and for ever removed, “ there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” False perception, having now taken full possession of the past, and extending its whole influence to the present, will always continue to operate, with increasing strength, till eternity itself is exhausted, by flowing in an endless series of successive moments of time, from the future to the present, and from the present to the past. And, therefore, this amazing operation, for ever acquiring new degrees of force, will be performed without any intermission, till the past becomes a boundless ocean. This is what is, in the figurative language of scripture, represented by “ the bottomless pit,” and “ the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.” (Rev. ix. 2. xxi. 8.) We shall, therefore, now leave these wretched victims of eternal vengeance, since their case has already become utterly helpless and hopeless, and return to the consideration of the infinite importance of the doctrine of the Mediator, to those who yet remain in a probationary state. We have already observed : That there are, in the original state of things, relative to the mutable system, a principle of eternal life, and also a principle of eternal death. The original principle of eternal life is of such a nature, that it is capable of being exchanged for a new principle, by the counteractive influence of which, when it is actually transmitted from the future to the present, the original principle of eternal death will be destroyed. But if this all-important exchange should not be seasonably made ; then sin, which has already begun to operate, will shortly finish its work, by introducing into the mental system, a perfect degree of falsehood ; by which falsehood, thus introduced, the principle of all

life will be absolutely excluded, and consequently the principle of eternal death will be unalterably confirmed ; and being once confirmed, it will for ever maintain, over the wretched soul, to which it immediately relates, its merciless dominion ; in which case the soul will be utterly lost beyond all possibility of recovery.

The all-important exchange, which, in the exercise of practical faith, is made by the removal of the original principle of life, and the consequent introduction of the new principle, by the counteractive influence of which the destroyer is destroyed, is represented, as we have said, in the sacred scriptures by the death and resurrection of the Mediator. Hence it is, that the Mediator, by dying and rising again, completely conquers the original principle of death ; and thus infallibly secures, to all, who are united to him, eternal life. For the original principle of infinite evil being once destroyed, the whole foundation of that inconceivably dreadful prison, which sin had begun to build for the eternal confinement of the soul, will be intirely and absolutely overthrown ; and therefore all whom “ the Son makes free, are free indeed.” (John viii. 36.) But if sin is left to finish the work, which it has already begun, and no effectual counteractive influence is transmitted from the future to the present ; then it will be but a short time, before all good will be intirely excluded, and consequently all evil will take the absolute and eternal possession of the soul. And, in this case, it will, instead of being supported by the vital influence of the Holy Spirit, that inhabits a future eternity, always be under the absolute dominion of false perception, for ever extending its deadly influence from the past to the present.

Hence you may see, that the doctrine, which relates to the exchange of the original principal of life, for that new principle, by which the possibility of all evil is to be destroyed, is, of all other doctrines the most important. And this doctrine, in order that it might powerfully engage the attention, and deeply interest the feelings of all ranks and orders of men, even those of the lowest capacity, has been exemplified, in such a manner, according to the authentic account, transmitted to us in the sacred writings, as to bring the grand object, to which it relates, within the immediate view of the senses. In order to show the nature of this exemplification it will be necessary to observe :

1. That all our knowledge of intellectual objects is obtained by *SUBSTITUTION* ; that is, by the substitution of words or things, for the intellectual objects themselves. It must also be observed ;

2. That any *word*, or any particular *thing*, when it is substituted for an intellectual object, is really the *SAME* as the object for which it is substituted ; that is, the substituted word is so united, as to become *ONE* with its object.

Hence we may truly ascribe to the substituted word or thing all the properties, which really belong to the object itself to which the word, by substitution, is united. The reason is, because the word, not indeed considered absolutely in itself, but, considered as being substituted for an intellectual object, is really the same as the object, for which it is substituted. It is on this principle that words acquire all their weight, value, and importance. Thus the word *JEHOVAH*, for instance, considered absolutely in itself, as being nothing but a *mere word*, consisting of certain

particular marks or characters, impressed on paper, or a *mere sound* uttered by the voice, is of no special value or importance ; but considered as being the same as a real and most important intellectual object ; viz. a being of infinite perfection, the Creator of all worlds, and the Supreme Governor of the universe, it is of infinite importance. Hence it follows ; That words have a *twofold nature*, with respect to which, there is a perfect distinction. Thus, in the instance, that has been already produced ; the word JEHOVAH, considered in itself, is a particular, finite, sensible, object, which presents itself to the eye or the ear according as it is written or spoken ; but, considered in character of a SUBSTITUTE, for that adorable Being, who is absolutely perfect in himself, and is the glorious Author of all finite existence, it is of an infinitely different NATURE from any finite object whatever. Thus it is evident, that words being substituted for intellectual objects, are really the same, and have all the same properties as the objects themselves. Words, considered by themselves, intirely separate from all intellectual objects, are nothing but words ; nothing but mere written characters or vocal sounds ; but when they are substituted for intellectual objects, they are of an essentially different nature from what they are, considered simply in themselves. What relates to the names of *particular sensible* objects is something, that falls under a very distinct consideration, which, as it cannot properly be introduced here, will be reserved for another place.

Separate all the words in the bible from those infinitely important intellectual objects, for which the words are now substituted, and consider them as being nothing but mere words of a certain particular shape or sound ; and

then, though the bible would still be of the same external form and size, as before, yet it would be wholly divested of all its special value and importance. This is an evident proof that words, substituted for intellectual objects, are of an essentially different NATURE from what they are, considered in themselves. As a confirmation of this, numerous instances might be produced from the sacred writings; we will just mention some of this kind. "In Judah God is known, his NAME is great in Israel. His NAME shall endure for ever: his name shall endure as long as the sun: and all men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wonderous things. And blessed be his glorious NAME for ever: And let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Nevertheless he saved them for his NAME's sake: that he might make his mighty power to be known. He sent redemption unto his people, he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his NAME. But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy; because thou defendest them; let them also that love thy NAME, be joyful in thee. I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high. For God will save Sion and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his NAME shall dwell therein. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his NAME: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his NAME together. For thou, O God, hast heard my

vows." (Psal. lxxvi. 1. lxxii. 17. cxi. 9. cvi. 8. v. 11. lxix. 35. xxix. 2. xxiv. 3.)

From the passages, that have been cited, with a vast variety of others, which might, if occasion required, be produced, it is very evident, that NAMES, being substituted for intellectual objects, are of an essentially *different nature* from what they are, considered *in themselves*, as being nothing but mere words, consisting in a particular set of letters and syllables. And this observation will apply, not only with respect to the NAME of the Supreme Being, according to the instances that have now been given, but also with respect to the names of any other objects, that belong to the intellectual system. Such names, therefore, are not to be regarded merely according to what they are, simply considered in themselves, but according to the *real nature* of the respective *objects*, with which the names are, *by substitution, united*. Thus, for instance, we do not pay any special regard to the particular shape or sound of the word or name, whatever it may be, which is substituted for that wonderful principle of perception, of which we all have an irresistible consciousness, when it is called, "a spirit," "the mind," or "the soul," &c. but it is the *perceptive principle itself*, for which the *name* is substituted, and with which, the name, being thus substituted, is really united, which is, in this case, the direct object of our regard. Hence it is evident: That the doctrine of SUBSTITUTION, is of the greatest importance; for it is by words or names, which, by substitution, become perfectly united with, and therefore assume the real nature of, their respective objects, that we are enabled to hold an intercourse, and carry on a correspondence, with the intellectual world. This ama-

zing contrivance, is the result of infinite wisdom and goodness; without this, we should never have been able to have extended our views beyond the objects of sense. And for the purpose of more fully illustrating and confirming this interesting subject, relative to the nature and importance of SUBSTITUTION, we shall now adduce some additional passages, from the sacred writings. "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his WORD do I hope. Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.... My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy WORD. Mine eyes fail for thy WORD, saying, When wilt thou comfort me? Thy WORD is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it. Thy WORD is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the WORD of our God shall stand for ever. For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the WORD of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the WORD of God, which worketh effectually also in you that believe. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD of God which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof fadeth away: but the WORD of the Lord endureth for ever." (Psal. cxxx. 5. cxix. 82, 140, 160. Isa. xl. 8. 1 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 23.)

Similar citations, from the sacred writings, might easily be multiplied; but those, that have already been made, are sufficient to show the important distinction subsisting between WORDS, when they are considered merely as be-

ing what they are *in themselves*, composed only of letters and syllables, arranged in a certain order, which composition and arrangement can be directly perceived by the eye or the ear; and when they are SUBSTITUTED for those invisible realities of the intellectual world, which can never be the object of the external senses. But only a very small degree of reflection is requisite to impress the mind with a full conviction, that words, in the latter case, are of an essentially different *nature* from what they are in the former. Nothing, therefore, can be more evident, than that *words* have a *twofold nature*, respecting which there is the greatest and most important distinction, especially, in those instances that have been produced..... And such is the nature of substitution, that it will extend not only to words, but also to any other sensible objects.

Under the Jewish dispensation, a great variety of things, that were visible to the natural eye, were substituted for spiritual objects. Particularly the sacrifices of beasts and birds; also the various things belonging to the tabernacle and the temple: "Wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil the tabernacle, which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot, that had manna, and Aaron's rod, that budded, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly." (Heb. ix. 2....5.)

Thus, various visible objects of sense, were from time substituted for the invisible realities of the intellectual world, till the grand era, to which all the preceding sub-

stitutions, relating to the glorious economy of redemption, had a special reference, at length arrived; when Christ Jesus, which is, being interpreted, the anointed Saviour, made his appearance in the world. He, considered as man, had a proper human nature; and, considered as being a SUBSTITUTE for the Second adorable Object of supreme regard, in the nature of the Deity, he had a real divine nature; he had, therefore, two perfectly distinct natures. "And his name is called, The Word of God." (Rev. xix. 13.) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made, that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.... There was a man sent from God, whose name was John: the same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." (John i. 1....14.)

The twofold character of Christ, as being *human* and *divine*, is repeatedly and expressly mentioned in the sacred writings. This is so evident, as to render it unnecessary to multiply citations in confirmation of it; two or three, however, will be produced. “And Jesus INCREASED in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man. And on the morrow when they came from Bethany he was HUNGRY. And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. He left Judea and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to a parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore being WEARIED with his journey, sat thus on the well. And it was about the sixth hour. Then cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there PRAYED. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: so also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee: as he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec: who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up PRAYERS and SUPPLICATIONS, with strong CRYING and TEARS, unto him that was able to save him

from death, and was heard in that he feared. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but said also, That God was his Father, making himself equal with God..... Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do. I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge; and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, who hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness, which he beareth of me is true. If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is GREATER than I." (Luke ii. 52. Mark xi. 12. John iv. 3....7. Mark i. 35. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 4....7. John v. 17....19. 30....32. and xiv. 28. See also Luke vi. 12.)

From the passages that have now been cited, the evidence is too plain to be resisted, that Christ possessed a proper *human nature*, considered as being an individual man, who made his personal visible appearance to the Jews; and who, *in a strict literal sense*, lived and died, among them, and on the third day after his death, arose from the dead. We shall now proceed to produce a few passages, from which it will appear to all who examine them with strict and impartial attention, equally evident, that this dignified and illustrious personage, considered in his SUBSTITUTIONAL CHARACTER, truly had a DIVINE NATURE. And that he is therefore, the only Mediator between God and man; and consequently, that on him intirely depends our eternal salvation from sin

and endless misery. For it is certain, that all life wholly depends on the *original principle* of life; but the man Christ Jesus, is, by SUBSTITUTION, the very same as this ORIGINAL PRINCIPLE; he is, therefore, the only Saviour. Hence it follows; That he is the way, and the truth, and THE LIFE: no man cometh to the Father but by him. (Joh. xiv. 6.) “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man: but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent him. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself: and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth.” (John iii. 35. v. 21. Matth. xxviii. 16.)

From the observations that have been made, together with the various passages that have been cited from the sacred scriptures, it must appear evident to all, who are not blinded by falsehood, and “hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,” to a degree beyond the power of language to express, that “there is One God and One Me-

diator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ ;” (1 Tim. ii. 5.) and that this Mediator is the Second of the Three Objects of supreme regard, each of which has a distinct subsistence in the Divine Nature. The First of these Three glorious Subsistences implies the infinite sum of all good, relative to all those, who are not already cut off from all happifying communications from the Deity. The Second is the only FOUNDATION of *securing* this infinite good. And the Third is the SECURITY ITSELF, by which the infinite good is to be infallibly and eternally confirmed or SEALED, to those, who, by the previous exercise of practical faith, have become actually united to the Mediator.

As various visible objects were, by divine appointment, substituted for spiritual things, relating to the grand economy of redemption, previous to the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Saviour ; so certain visible objects have been divinely appointed, as substitutes, for the purpose of perpetuating the remembrance of that great event. The sacred memorials, to which we now refer, are *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*. These are designed to impress the mind with a deep and solemn sense of the absolute necessity of the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, in order to sanctify the soul and deliver it from the power and dominion of sin ; and also to exhibit a continual and affecting view of the Mediator, as being the whole life, the food and nourishment of the soul, without which it must inevitably languish and die. Hence it is of infinite importance, that the Mediator should always be kept in view ; therefore, his followers have been directed and commanded, to form themselves into a standing society, denominated, “The Church of

Christ," that they may remain through all succeeding ages, till the final consummation of all things, "the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world." (Matth. v. 13, 14.)

The actual security of eternal happiness necessarily implies a previous foundation for such happiness to be actually secured; and this foundation is the Mediator. "For other foundation can no man lay than that, which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iv. 11.) It is evident, therefore, that according to the order of things in the divine economy of redemption, there is no security (notwithstanding there being a foundation for it) *previous* to the exercise of faith in the Mediator. "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, ye were SEALED, with the Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i. 12, 13.)

But if you have not sufficiently attended to the preceding observations, you will, perhaps, think it strange, that it should be requisite to remove the original foundation of security in order to open the way for the introduction of the actual security itself; or in the language of scripture; that Christ should die, in order to procure that effectual counteractive influence of the Holy Spirit, by which the destroyer is to be destroyed. Let it be remembered, then, that, in the original state of things, relative to the mutable system, there is a real *foundation* for security *previous* to there being any *actual security*. The original foundation, therefore, does not, in itself, imply any security. It is, however, of such a nature, that it may be exchanged for that, in which, when it is once transmitted from the future to the present, infallible secu-

urity will be actually implied. But, in order to open the way for the introduction of the security, the original foundation must be removed. Let it also be remembered, that there are two ways of removing the original foundation of security, which are directly opposite to each other. One is by the exercise of practical faith. In this case, the Mediator falls to rise again, and by dying conquers death: for he falls not alone; but the original principle of infinite evil, falls with him, and falls to rise no more. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the like of his resurrection: knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 5.) For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) And the other way of removing the original foundation of security is in direct opposition to the one that has just been described. For one way is by the exercise of practical faith in the Mediator; as we have already observed; but the other is by filling up the measure of iniquity and thus introducing that falsehood, which, being absolutely inconsistent with the infinite sum of all good, unalterably confirms the original principle of infinite evil. In this case, therefore, all the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit will be totally extinguished. Hence you may see the infinite importance of paying a suitable and a seasonable regard to

the solemn warning given by the apostle; "QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT." (1 Thess. v. 19.)

When sin, in league with the adversary, has once finished its work, by introducing such a degree of falsehood, as to intercept all the goodness of the Deity, and extinguish all his love; then "a fire will be kindled, in his anger, which will burn to the lowest hell." (Deut. xxxii. 22.) "For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord will judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God." (Heb. x. 26.....31.)

Those leading doctrines, that have now been considered, do, from the nature of them, evidently prove the scriptures, in which they are contained, to be of divine original. There are others, in connexion with those, which have been the subject of examination, also contained in the sacred volume, which are of the highest practical importance; such as the universal depravity of mankind; the absolute necessity, in order for the actual attainment of safety and durable happiness, of an essential and radical change of heart; the limited term of pro-

bation allotted to the inhabitants of this world, to prepare for endless futurity ; and that awful state of eternal rewards and punishments, which will certainly and inevitably succeed the present short, precarious, transitory scene. These most interesting subjects, which have been often incidentally mentioned, in the preceding pages, will be more particularly considered, when we come to treat on the nature, the agency, and the final destination of the human mind.

SECTION SECOND.

On the miracles and prophecies recorded in scripture.

All effects, that take place, may be divided into two general classes ; which, for the sake of distinction, may be called *natural* and *supernatural*. All those of the supernatural kind, or those which are above the ordinary course of nature, are miraculous. Various effects of this kind are recorded in scripture, and are as well attested, as any historical accounts whatever, and are, therefore, worthy of the highest degree of credit. Visible miracles are simple facts, for the confirmation of which, nothing more is required, than the testimony of the senses ; and therefore, they are calculated to impress conviction on the minds of the illiterate, as well as the learned. It does not require great genius nor extraordinary ability to understand, and feel the force of ocular demonstration. Consequently ; the truth of a miraculous event, when it is directly presented to the senses, is much more easily ascertained, as being a reality, than what is often the case, respecting the truth implied in a conclusion, resulting

from a long series of premises, which is made use of in the course of reasoning : for persons are much less liable to be deceived by the immediate object of sight or hearing, than they are by verbal arguments, addressed to their intellectual faculties. There are a number of events recorded in scripture, which, admitting the *history* of them to be a true narrative of *facts*, of which there is not any reason to doubt, were really of the miraculous kind. Such were the events themselves, and such the number, state, and circumstances of the immediate witnesses of them, that there could not possibly be any deception, respecting their nature and reality. From among the many instances of miraculous events, which, with all the marks of an honest simplicity and veracity, are recorded in the historical part of scripture, a few will now be selected.

“ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground : and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharoah’s chariots, his horses, and his horsemen. And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled against it : and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of Pha-

roah that came into the sea after them : there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land : and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians : and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians. And the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses.” (Exod. xiv. 21.....31.)

“ In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai ; and had pitched in the wilderness ; and there Israel camped before the mount. And the Lord said unto Moses ; Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day : for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud : so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire : and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice. And all the

people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us and we will hear ; but let not God speak with us lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not : for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was. And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.” (Exod. xix. 1, 2, 10, 11, 16.....19. xx. 18.....22.)

“ And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves : for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you..... And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people. And the the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither and hear the words of the Lord your God. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. Behold the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth pass

eth over before you into Jordan. Now therefore take ye twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests, that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap. And it came to pass when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; and as they that bore the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bore the ark, were dipped in the brim of the water (for Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of harvest) that the waters, which came down from above, stood and rose up upon an heap, very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt-sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, stood firm on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan." (Josh. iii. 5....17.)

"Now Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.... And the Lord said unto Joshua, See I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priest shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come

to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout: and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord. And he said unto the people, Pass on and compass the city, and let him that is armed, pass on before the ark of the Lord. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests, bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns, passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rere-ward came after the ark, the priests going on and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people saying, Ye shall not shout nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout, then shall ye shout. So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. And seven priests, bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord, went on continually, and blew with the trumpets, and the armed men went before them, but the rere-ward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. And it came

to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times : only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets : and it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city." (Josh. vi. 1....16, 20.)

"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, and he healed their sick. And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past ; send the multitude away that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. Jesus said unto them, They need not depart ; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fishes. He said unto them, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass ; and he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled : and they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children." (Matth. xiv. 14....21.)

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a

certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple, which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple. Who seeing Peter and John, about to go into the temple, asked an alms. And Peter fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none ; but such as I have give I thee : In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. And they knew that it was he who sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple : and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man, who was healed, held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this ? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk ? And as they spoke unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them : being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day : for it was now eventide. Howbeit, many of them who heard the word believed : and the number of the men was about five thou-

sand. And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man who was healed, standing with them, they could say nothing against it. And when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell at Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Je-

sus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So, when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people : for all men glorified God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed." (Acts iii. 1....12, iv. 1....22.)

The preceding historical extracts, containing a plain, simple narrative of a number of miraculous events, are stamped with all the characters of truth, and therefore demand our credit, as much as what is recorded in any history whatever. And if the narrative itself is once admitted to be authentic ; then the particular events which are related, must also be admitted to be of the miraculous kind. But perhaps you may be ready to say : That you could easily believe the historical account, if the events, of which a relation is given, were not of such an extraordinary kind, as to cast a shade of suspicion over the truth of the narrative. But you cannot, you will say, believe any thing, which is inconsistent with the established laws of nature.

It may, however, be enquired ; whether you are certain, that you have actually obtained such a knowledge of all the laws of nature, or rather the laws of Divine operation, as to be able to pronounce, with full assurance, that a miracle does, in the very nature of it, imply a contradiction ? if this is not the case, then there may, notwithstanding any opinion you may entertain on the subject, be some law of divine operation, according to which miraculous events have been actually produced. There is in

the universal system, a variety of laws, according to which particular events may take place. The law of mechanical motion is perfectly distinct from that of gravitation; and the law of voluntary motion is perfectly distinct from either of them. And there may, notwithstanding any pretended proof to the contrary, be some law of divine operation, respecting the production of miraculous events, which is perfectly distinct from any of those principles, from which result, the various changes, which are continually taking place, according to the common course of nature, both in the material, and in the mental, system. We do, indeed know with certainty, that any thing, which does, in the very nature of the thing itself, imply a contradiction, cannot be true. This, however, is not the case with regard to any of those miraculous events, which are recorded in scripture. Therefore, from the circumstance of their being of such a wonderful nature, as to be beyond the influence of any common philosophical principles, you cannot deduce any legitimate conclusion, that they never actually existed.

With regard to the prophetic predictions contained in scripture, we shall only observe, in general, that they are of the *same nature*, as miraculous events. For it is impossible, that any one, from the assumption of present facts, or from any speculative principles of reasoning, should with certainty foretel distant future events; which depend on the volition of free agents. Those persons, therefore, who have, with the greatest degree of accuracy, foretold such events, were under the influence of divine inspiration. The prophecy respecting the peculiar character of the descendants of Ishmael, has been fulfilling, in a very remarkable manner, for a long course

of years. Previous to the birth of Ishmael, the future character of his descendants, (the Arabians) was exactly delineated. The prophecy of Moses, recorded in the twenty-eighth and thirtieth chapters of Deuteronomy, respecting the dreadful destiny of the Jewish nation; also the predictions, uttered by succeeding prophets, concerning the destruction of Tyre, Egypt, and Babylon; and especially the numerous prophecies, relative to the appearance of the Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, have all been fulfilled, in the correspondent events, which have actually taken place. And there are some very important prophecies, particularly those, that have a special reference to the millennial state, which yet remain to be accomplished: "When the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound. In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn

war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid : for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." (Isa. xi. 9. xxx. 26. Mic. iv. 1. See also Isa. lx.)

From a view of the interesting nature of the doctrines contained in the scriptures, and of the miracles and prophecies, by which those doctrines are confirmed ; together with a large sum of collateral evidence, arising from the consideration of the powerful efficacy of the scriptures on the mind ; their sublimity ; their purity ; the harmonious connexion of all their parts ; the character of the writers, &c we have the greatest reason to conclude them to be of divine original. " They are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim. iii. 16.) And they are able to make those, who form an experimental acquaintance with them, wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

SECTION THIRD.

On the figurative language of scripture.

In addition to the remarks, that have already been made, there is one thing to be observed, which is worthy of special notice ; and that is, the figurative style, in which some parts of the scripture greatly abound. This is the result of the imperfection of human language, and the very limited degree of knowledge, which mankind possessed, in the early stages of their existence. A very large share of the words, which are now used to express the unseen realities of the intellectual world, were originally formed to denote those visible or tangible objects,

which are directly perceptible by the external senses of seeing or hearing. The word, *spirit*, for instance, in its original formation, signifies *breath*, *air*, or *wind*. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (John. iii. 8.) Here it is observable; That the same Greek word (*pneuma*) which, in the first part of the verse, is translated *wind*, is, in the last part of the same verse, translated *Spirit*. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and *breathed* into his nostrils the *breath* of life: and man became *a living soul*.” (Gen. ii. 7.) “And the hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones. And he caused me to pass by them round about, and behold there were very many, in the open valley, and lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you: and ye shall live, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied, as I was commanded; and as I prophesied there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them; then said he unto me, Prophe-

sy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." (Ezek. xxxvii. 1.....10.)

With regard to *common* objects, such figurative expressions may be used, as to give a representation, which exceeds the bounds of truth. This, however, can never be the case with respect to the figurative language of scripture. Because the real objects, to which such language relates, infinitely surpass the power of all description. Especially, with regard to the perfections of the Deity; the final judgment; and the respective states of eternal rewards and punishments, in the future world. With regard to these things, and others, that might be mentioned, no language can be so forcible, as to excite any conception too great for its object; for let the conception be ever so great, yet the real object will be greater still. And therefore, though the scripture is not to be understood, as being, in every part of it, literally true; because, as we have already observed, some parts of it are expressed in figurative language; yet it is, notwithstanding, really true, in substance, far beyond what any language can express; and consequently we never can form too enlarged conceptions of its value and importance.

We will produce a few instances, in which the language of scripture is evidently figurative, and in which the expressions that are used are not to be understood, as being literally true. "And it REPENTED the Lord that

he had made man on the earth, and it GRIEVED him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have made, from the face of the earth, both man and beast and the creeping thing and the fowls of the air ; for it REPENTETH me that I have made them." (Gen. vi. 6, 7.) Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king : for he has turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." (1 Sam. xv. 10.) "And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord REPENTED him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough ; stay now thine hand." (2 Sam. xxiv. 16.) "Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward ; therefore will I stretch out my HAND against thee, and destroy thee ; I am WEARY with REPENTING." (Jer. xv. 6.) "And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel ? saith the Lord. But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets, saying Prophecy not. Behold, I am PRESSED under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves." (Amos ii. 11, 12, 13.) "In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God : he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his EARS. Then the earth shook and trembled : the foundations also of the hills moved, and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his NOSTRILS, and fire out of his MOUTH devoured ; coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down : and darkness was under his FEET. And he RODE upon a

cherub, and DID FLY; yea he did fly upon the wings of the wind." (Psal. xviii. 6.....10.)

No candid, impartial, attentive reader, even though he may be a person of very ordinary capacity, will be liable to be led into error by those figurative expressions, in which the members of the human body, or the passions of the human mind, are ascribed to the Deity, when he duly considers what reason plainly dictates, and what the general tenor of scripture, conspiring with reason, fully confirms, that God is a most pure Spirit; not having bodily parts nor mental passions, but is a Being of infinite perfection and absolute immutability.

The revelation of St. John the Divine greatly abounds in figurative language. It is, however, to be observed; That though the solemn and all-important scenes, which are there painted in the most lively colours, are not, in all respects, literally true, relative to the things which they are designed to represent; yet they are, in substance, most strictly true, even infinitely beyond what can be expressed by the most striking representations, that any language can possibly form. The pictures, though drawn by a pencil, guided by inimitable skill, instead of exceeding, fall far, even infinitely far, below the real objects to which they relate. The reason is, because the real objects themselves are such in their nature, as to surpass the utmost limits of the most sprightly imagination, exerting all its strength, to form the most enlarged conceptions of all that is dreadful or delightful, in its widest extreme.

Respecting the temporary objects, belonging to the present world, such descriptions may be drawn, as to occasion a great deception, with regard to the things described, by exciting an idea more extensive, than the ac-

tual existence of its proper object. But the case is essentially different, with relation to the eternal realities of the future world ; to express which the inspired writers have frequently made use of figurative language, that they might rouse all the latent energies of the soul, by sensibly affecting the heart, and deeply interesting the feelings, as well as by informing the understanding.... And in this case, there can be no danger of deception, but only what may arise from *confining* the views of the mind to the *literal meaning* of those words, which ought to be understood in a *figurative sense*. Though the orator or the poet may paint, in colours too dark or too bright, the pains or the pleasures, which frail mortals may have to endure, or enjoy, in their passage from the cradle to the grave ; yet, this cannot possibly be the case, with respect to that endless happiness or misery into which all will certainly enter, as soon as the short journey of the present life is ended.

With respect to the figurative language of scripture, it may be safely admitted, as a general rule ; that the real objects, to which such language relates, are as great and important as the literal import of the expression would naturally convey an idea, and that they are as much greater, and more important, as the mind can possibly conceive, by exerting all its powers to form the most enlarged conception. By adopting this rule, every honest reader of the sacred scriptures will be secured from being led into error, by the figurative language that relates to the Deity, or the all-important concerns of the human soul. It is important to observe : That there are some things, with respect to which, even though we should admit them to be true, yet we ought to extend our views

far beyond what is literally expressed. A very remarkable instance of this kind, is that, which relates to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in the garden of Eden, of the fruit of which our first parents were strictly forbidden to eat. If we confine our ideas to the literal statement of a single fact, which had no relation to the general nature of things, and suppose the eternal happiness, or misery, of mankind were suspended on one external, and, in itself considered, indifferent circumstance, we shall entertain very contracted and dishonourable views of the supreme moral Governor of the universe, and of that infinitely benevolent law, which he originally ordained, for the benefit of his rational creatures, to guard them from evil. The Deity, being absolutely and independently happy in himself, in the full and unalterable possession of his own universal immutable system of infinite perfection, was perfectly willing, that all perceptive beings, who were to exist in the mutable system, should also be happy. And therefore he did all, that could be done, to prevent the introduction of misery.

Since there were two original principles, relative to the mutable system ; viz. a possibility of infinite evil, as well as a possibility of infinite good ; the Deity, therefore, not on his own account (there being no possibility of evil with respect to himself) but for the benefit of imperfect beings, did, from the most pure benevolence, ordain a law, strictly requiring all finite free agents to wholly refrain from the principle of evil, and leave that to his absolute disposal ; that it might be consistent for him, when the proper time should arrive for that purpose, to remove it intirely out of the system. According to this law, which was perfectly holy, just and good, it was impossi-

ble, notwithstanding there being an original principle of evil, that *evil itself* should have actually come into existence. It was, therefore, not by the law itself, nor by any thing, that the Deity ever did, or forbore to do, but by the transgression of the law, in which transgression all moral evil consists, that the way was opened for the necessary introduction of natural evil. For when the moral law, which was designed for the regulation of the conduct of finite free agents, is violated; then the law of divine operation, according to which the Supreme Agent regulates his own conduct, absolutely requires, that natural evil should be introduced, and that, being introduced, it should have a necessary existence, for the present, or through endless duration, just as the nature of the case may require. For in the order of things, relative to the mutable system, it is universally the case, that there is a *possibility* of evil, PREVIOUS to there being any *necessity* of it. This is evident; because there was, in the original state of things, a *possibility* of evil, even *before* there was any created existence; but there never was any *necessity* of it, till the *time* of the *actual violation* of the moral law by finite free agents. When the time arrived, in which moral evil, consisting in a violation of that law, which required all finite free agents to absolutely refrain from the original principle of evil, actually took place, then, but never before, the Supreme Moral Governor of the universe introduced the necessity of natural evil. There was nothing, in the original state of things, to render it inconsistent, that all possibility of evil should, in the *proper time*, have been intirely exterminated. And had this been actually done, then all good would have been unalterably confirmed; and therefore the mutable system, to which finite

beings belong, would have been inseparably united, in a state of the most happy correspondence, with the immutable system of infinite perfection, which peculiarly belongs to the Deity. But now the case is essentially altered; for the very foundation of such union is now forever removed. An eternal separation has, *in some instances*, actually taken place. The entrance of sin, into the system, has, in respect to *some individuals*, made a breach, that never can be healed: it has introduced an injury, that never can be repaired. It may be, however, a consoling consideration to those, who will avail themselves of its inestimable value, that the mutable system, though it is, in some cases, essentially injured, beyond all possibility of reparation, yet is not universally reduced to a state of hopeless ruin. For there are *some*, who already have the infallible security of being eternally happy. There are *others*, who still remain in an unconfirmed state; of whose souls, therefore, the original principle of evil has not yet taken an absolute possession.... Respecting those, of this last description, though they have no *actual* security, yet there is a *foundation* for their being secured. They must remember, however, that the *original foundation* for security, is perfectly distinct from the *security itself*. They are, therefore, notwithstanding this original foundation of their being secured, continually in a state of the most alarming danger; and consequently the nature of their case most urgently demands their speedy application to the glorious Redeemer, through whom alone, deliverance can be obtained. It must always be kept in view, that there is no medium between a state of perfect *danger*, and a state of perfect *security*.

From the preceding observations it is evident ; That when we read, in the second and third chapters of Genesis, the brief account, which is there given of a certain external visible object, called “ the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” we ought not to *confine* ourselves intirely to the sensible ideas, which may be excited by the mere literal statement. For, in thus doing, we shall entertain but a very partial view of the real truth ; even of *that* truth, a right understanding of which, is of the highest practical importance, considered as relating to the moral law, and the glorious character of the infinitely benevolent Lawgiver. This adorable and most amiable Being, had done all, that could be done, to prevent that tremendous evil, in which millions, by their transgression of his most reasonable command, are actually involved, and from which it has now become eternally too late for them ever to be extricated. That we ought not to confine our views intirely to the literal import of the narrative, exhibiting a brief statement of certain external circumstances, relative to the state of innocence, and the fall of our first parents, which is given by Moses, is very remarkably illustrated and confirmed by the prophet Isaiah. “ Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard, in a very fruitful hill : and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein : and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to

my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now, go to: I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold, a cry." (Isa. v. 1.....7.)

That there was, in the original state of things, a possibility of evil, is proved by incontestable fact; for evil does actually exist; which never could have been the case, if there had been no original possibility of its existence. Now, though you must at once plainly see, and sensibly feel, the impropriety of inquiring, Why the Deity did not prevent the original possibility of evil: that is; Why he did not prevent the FIRST state of things, relative to the mutable system, from being *what it really was at first*? yet you may, perhaps be disposed to inquire, Why the Deity, though he admitted the original *possibility* of evil, yet did not prevent the *actual existence* of it? We answer....That he *did do* all, that was to be done, and all that *could*, in the nature of things, be done, in order to prevent the actual existence of evil. Hence he makes the solemn appeal....“*What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?*”.... The Deity ordained a law, absolutely requiring all finite free agents to wholly refrain from the original principle

of evil. Evil therefore took place, not because there was *not enough* done to prevent it, but because *too much* was done to introduce it; for *that* was done, in transgressing the moral law, in consequence of the *not doing* of which, no evil would ever have been introduced. Hence, with respect to the prevention of evil, finite beings ought not to complain of the Deity for not doing *enough*; but they ought to take all the blame wholly to themselves, for doing *too much*; for doing that, which they were strictly forbidden to do....Especially when it is considered, that they were, by the divine injunction, restrained from nothing but what was, in the very nature of things, absolutely injurious and destructive to themselves. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. ii. 16, 17.)

If, previous to the first existence of evil, any finite being had inquired of the Deity, What was to be done with the original principle of infinite evil? he would have replied: Obey my order with respect to that principle, by letting it intirely alone; and you shall never be injured by it; leave it absolutely to my disposal, and when the proper time arrives for that purpose, I will wholly remove it out of the system, and thus secure you in the eternal possession of infinite good. But if you presume to disobey my command by doing that, which is expressly forbidden; then the nature of your case will absolutely require your being for ever cut off from all happiness and plunged into a state of irretrievable misery. Therefore take seasonable warning, and thus prevent the evil, so

that there may remain a possibility of securing the good. Be obedient ; and all shall be well, in the final event. Trust the accomplishment of the whole with me. " I the Lord will hasten it in its time." (Isa. lx. 22.)

If you should inquire, Whether the conduct of the Deity would have been different towards his creatures, if they had conducted differently towards him ? we answer directly in the affirmative ; That his conduct would have been essentially different. For if finite free agents had never violated the moral law ; then the Deity never would have introduced any evil into the system ; but would, in the course of his disposal of events have removed the original principle of all evil, and thus would have effectually secured the greatest possible sum of happiness to all perceptive beings ; in which case, a perfect harmony would have subsisted between the universal Parent and all his intelligent offspring. The case is, therefore, very different from what it would have been, if sin had never entered into existence. The immutable system of infinite perfection, which constitutes the absolute, complete, unchangeable and eternal felicity of Jehovah, does, indeed, remain unalterably the same, without any increase or diminution, or any variation whatever ; but the *mutable* system, to which finite beings naturally belong, has, by the taking place of moral evil, been essentially injured. Sin has, with relation to the sinner, changed the God of infinite goodness to a God of implacable vengeance ; and therefore his conduct, *in some instances*, is directly the reverse of what it would have been, if the moral law had never been violated. " Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee : O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me ; there shall be no strange god in thee : neither shalt thou worship any strange god. I am the

Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt; open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. But my people would not hearken to my voice : and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own heart's lust ; and they walked in their own counsels. O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways ! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. Turn ye, at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded ; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof : I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh : when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer ; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel : they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." (Psal. lxxxi. 8.....14. Prov. i. 23.)

You may now, perhaps, inquire ; Whether there is not more good in the system, than there would, or could have been, if moral evil had never taken place ? In answer to this, it may be observed ; That in the immutable system of infinite perfection, *which is the only source of all true happiness*, that infinite sum of original good, which there was, previous to the taking place of moral evil, still remains, considered in itself, invariably the same, without any alteration, by increase or diminution ; but

that infinite original good, which, if moral evil had never existed, might have been for ever secured to all perceptive beings, is now, with respect to *some* of them, irrecoverably and eternally lost. Therefore, while, in the *immutable* system, absolutely considered, there has not been, even in the least degree, any variation from its original state, the *mutable* system has, by the actual existence of sin, been the subject of an essential change; a change, which has, in no respect whatever, rendered it any *better*; but has, in some respects, rendered it infinitely *worse*, than it was before. No plea, therefore, in whatever view it is considered, can ever be made in favour of sin. The best that can be said of it, is; “That it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison.” (Jam. iii. 7.) It cannot be vindicated, as being, in any way whatever, conducive to the honour, glory or happiness of the Deity. Because he is the absolute proprietor of a universal, independent, immutable, and eternal system, peculiarly his own, into which sin can never enter; for, with relation to that system, which of all possible systems is the best, there neither is, nor ever was, any possibility of evil. It cannot be vindicated as contributing, either essentially or occasionally, to the happiness of finite beings. Their happiness cannot be *derived from any thing*, that has a peculiar relation to the *mutable system*. For it cannot be derived from the original principle of evil; nor from any connexion with that principle; nor from the misery resulting from such connexion. But all their happiness must be intirely derived from an infinitely DIFFERENT SOURCE; viz. from that universal, immutable system of absolute perfection, which constitutes the supreme, independent felicity of the Deity himself, and which, through

the Saviour alone, can be secured to those perceptive beings, who are not yet irrecoverably lost, by a final separation from the inexhaustible fountain of love and goodness. It is, therefore, not the *mutable*, but the *immutable* system, which is always to be considered as the absolute STANDARD, of all perfection and the ONLY SOURCE OF ALL HAPPINESS. Therefore the more free any system is from sin and misery, the greater is its perfection. Consequently, *that system* which is INTIRELY FREE, not only from evil itself, but also from every principle of evil, is, of all others, the most perfect; and it is such a system that constitutes HEAVEN. That which is directly opposite to this is HELL; in which the principle of all evil is absolutely predominant, without any thing to counterbalance it, or counteract its continual and eternal operation.

This principle, in its original state, is of such a nature, that it may be *exterminated* by *faith*, or be *confirmed* by *falsehood*; and accordingly, to those whom it naturally relates, will be admitted to heaven or doomed to hell. Therefore, “he that believeth shall be saved; but he, that believeth not, shall be damned.” (Mar. xvi. 16.) Hence it is evident, that the prohibitory command, which God gave to our first parents, requiring them to abstain from “the tree of knowledge of good and evil,” was not arbitrary nor unjust, neither was it merely circumstantial; but it was founded in the original nature of things; and was not confined to them alone, but equally extends to all mankind of every age and nation. For the original principle of evil is the foundation of sin; sin introduces falsehood into the mental system; and falsehood is the source of misery. The original principle of infinite evil,

as long as finite agents intirely refrain from interfering with it, is perfectly harmless ; for while it remains in the hands of the Deity alone, he can dispose of it, in the best manner, by retaining it, as long as it is suitable, that it should be retained, and then, by removing it, whenever the proper time, for its being removed, arrives. But when any finite agent, in direct opposition to the divine command, has once formed an agreement with this principle, it will become absolutely inconsistent, even for the Deity, ever to remove it ; the inconceivably dreadful consequence, consisting in eternal misery, must, therefore, in this case, inevitably follow. “For the Lord will rise up as in mount Perazin, he will be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act.” (Isa. xxviii. 21.) And now, since the system of infinite perfection, which essentially belongs to the Deity, is absolutely free from all evil ; it was, therefore according to the original state of things, perfectly agreeable to his nature, and his universal plan of operation, to remove out of the mutable system, the principle of all evil, and retain that of all good ; therefore what is directly opposite to this, consisting in his *removing* the principle of good and retaining that of evil, is called “his work, his *strange* work ; his act, his *strange* act.” Consequently he has given every finite free agent full liberty to take hold of his power, as it relates to good ; but he absolutely requires him to refrain from that, which relates to evil. Hence his language is ; “Let him take hold of MY STRENGTH, that he may make PEACE with me, and he shall make peace with me.” “Hold fast that which is GOOD. Abstain from all appearance of evil.” (Isa. xxvii. 5. 1 Thess. v. 21, 22.)

THE DISCOVERY

OF THE

TRUTH DISPLAYED.

PART SECOND.

THE HISTORY OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

FROM ITS FIRST INSTITUTION IN 1660 TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY

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TRUTH DISPLAYED.

PART SECOND.

ON THE VISIBLE UNIVERSE ; CONSISTING OF MATTER AND
MOTION.

Introduction.

THERE are, as we have observed, in the first part of this work, two perfectly distinct systems ; one of which is intirely independent of the other, and is, in itself alone, absolutely complete, in all respects, to an infinite degree ; being utterly incapable of admitting any increase or diminution. This system is capable of admitting, without implying any change in itself, another system, which is absolutely dependent on the first. Therefore, all dependence, all change, all imperfection, so far as there ever can be any imperfection, all evil, and ALL POSSIBILITY OF EVIL, wholly belong to the mutable system.

There is, in the immutable system, a *foundation* for an infinite series of changes, relative to finite existence.... And *that*, to which we now refer, is that endless stream of TIME, which is flowing, and will for ever continue to flow, in one uniform succession, from the future to the present, and from the present to the past. But while this amazing process is continually carried on, without any intermission, by the unfailing vital energy of the ever

living God ; the divine Mind, the divine perception, and the boundless OBJECT of this perception, consisting in the whole sytem of absolute perfection, all remain unalterably the same. And even that TIME, which is continually passing, is something, which has all been present before. For the whole of eternity, which is now future, in a separate state, has once all been present, in a state of connexion with itself. That continual flow of time, of which we have been speaking, will be as lasting as eternity, and is as far from having any dependence on any thing of a mutable nature, as the divine existence itself. The succession of time, would always remain invariably the same, if there was no such thing as finite existence. Though the Deity eternally possessed the whole power, relating to all events, that ever can exist : yet such is the nature of his plan of operation, as to require TIME for the *actual exertion* of his power. The very nature of finite existence requires succession, with relation to the events, that are to be produced. The whole of mutable existence cannot all be present at once ; the actual exertions, of divine power, relative to it, therefore, are successive. And, consequently, it has not been from *eternity*; but takes place in *time*. There was not an original necessity of finite existence ; but the Deity introduced a *necessity*, by the *exertion* of his power. For he was possessed of all power, previous to any actual exertion ; and therefore, there was a foundation, or a possibility, of mutable existence, before the existence itself was actually produced. That there was such an original possibility, is evident ; for had not this been really the case ; then there never could have been any such existence. But that there actually is existence of this kind, is an undeniable

fact ; and therefore there was an original possibility of it. And here we must again bring into view, the distinction between the original state of the immutable, and that of the mutable system. Let it, then, be carefully observed ; That, with regard to the *former*, there was no possibility of the *want* of any thing, which could ever belong to that system ; and therefore, all possibility was on the *affirmative side* ; but with regard to the *latter*, there was not only an original possibility of existence, but there was an original possibility of the *want* of existence. In the original state of things, therefore, there were two possibilities ; one on the *affirmative*, and the other on the *negative* side. Hence it is evident, that, with relation to the mutable system, the Deity was originally invested with a **TWOFOLD POWER** ; by the exertion of which, in removing the possibility of nonexistence, and retaining that, on the opposite side, he created the visible universe. And he did this, not by modifying, or giving a new form to preexistent materials, but by producing that, which, previous to his exertion, had no actual existence.

Hence “we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things, which are seen, were not made of things, which do appear.” (Heb. xi. 3.) With regard to the mutable system, therefore, there was an original want of finite existence ; and consequently it was by the exertion of divine power, that such existence was actually produced. But with respect to the system of infinite perfection, the case was essentially different. For there was no *possibility* of the *want* of any existence to render **THAT SYSTEM** absolutely complete. Therefore, all possibility was on the side, opposite to that of nonexistence. And all possibility, being wholly on

the affirmative side, was the same as necessity ; a necessity of universal, immutable, and eternal perfection. And since this necessity was absolutely original, and not introduced by any exertion of power ; therefore, there is not any thing, in the system, to which it relates, that can be said to have been *created*, or produced from a state of nonexistence. As it was, in its original state, so it is now, and eternally will be, completely perfect, in the highest possible degree, and absolutely independent of all the changes or revolutions, that ever did, or ever can take place. All, that belongs to it, whereby it is constituted a system of absolute, infinite perfection, has been from eternity. The supreme felicity of the Deity, therefore, has no dependence on, nor any relation to, any finite existence, nor on his *power* to produce it. The reason is, because he has an immutable system of his own, which is absolutely complete, without bringing any finite existence into the account. But that existence, which now belongs to the mutable system, was originally wanting, and was, *in time*, actually *created*, by the *exertion* of divine power, in removing the possibility of nonexistence and retaining the opposite possibility. As the mutable system has a peculiar relation to *future time* ; so the Supreme Agent, according to his own universal plan of operation, always exerts his power, with respect to *this system*, whenever the *proper time*, for such exertion, becomes actually present. And this is the same, as for him to conduct, in his disposal of events, just as he sees fit. Respecting any particular event, therefore, which he will see fit to produce, it belongs to him to say ; “ I the Lord will hasten it IN ITS TIME.” (Isa. lx. 22.) And consequently, it would be inconsistent and unreasonable to in-

quire ; Why he does not exert his power, before the proper time, or why he does not forbear to exert it, when the proper time arrives. “ To every thing there is a season, and A TIME to every purpose under heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die : a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted : a time to kill, and a time to heal : a time to break down, and a time to build up.” (Eccl. iii. 1.)

The Deity never exerts his power, *too soon*, nor *too late* ; but performs all his operations, each one in due season. And this course of conduct, he will always invariably pursue, whatever may be the consequence, whether good or evil, to finite beings. He never will do injury to any, who are obedient to his commands ; but those, who, by transgression, provoke him to anger, must feel the terrible effects of his displeasure. Since the mutable system has a peculiar relation to future time, therefore the operations of the Deity, relative to the particular events of this system, are *successively* performed. For though he was eternally invested with ALL POWER, with respect to every possible event ; yet his original plan, being adapted to the peculiar *nature* of the system, to which it relates, requires that his power should be exerted, not all at once, but in particular operations, succeeding each other, in a series, extending through endless futurity..... This endless series of divine operations, was first begun, in the production of that kind of existence, which we call MATTER. And matter being created, another perfectly distinct kind of existence was introduced, in addition to it, which we shall call MOTION. And from the addition of *motion* to *matter*, results a certain *consequence* or *effect*, which, for the want of any appropriate term, in

the language, whereby to express it, we must, either by way of circumlocution, call, A CHANGE OF PLACE, OR *a change of matter in respect to its place*; or else we must introduce an intirely new term, for the purpose of expressing it. The former will be preferred to the latter. The three things, that have been mentioned, viz. *matter*, *motion*, and *a change of matter in respect to its place*, are all perfectly distinct from each other. We shall treat of these in their order.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GENERAL PROPERTIES OF MATTER.

PREVIOUS to that amazing exertion of Almighty power, by which the whole material system was created, there was the intire *want* of all mutable existence. There was, indeed, a foundation of this kind of existence; otherwise it could never have taken place; or, in other words; the Deity was invested with an original power, completely adequate to its production. But yet the existence itself, previous to the divine exertion, was, in every degree, and in every form, intirely wanting. It was, therefore, wholly produced from a state of nonexistence. But matter, being actually created, is now, in consequence of its mutable nature, capable of being changed, and differently modified, in an infinite variety of ways.... "For every house is built by some man: but he that built all things is God." (Heb. iii. 4.) The building of a house does not consist in the creation of any thing from a state of nonexistence; but it consists merely in giving

a new form to what existed before. But matter had no actual existence, in any form, till it was created, by the actual exertion of divine power. Hence, it is a universal property of matter, to be the FIRST of *all created things*.

LOCALITY is also an essential property of matter. For there can be no such thing as *matter* exclusive of *space* ; to *that*, therefore, it always has a peculiar relation, and in that it is contained. Matter absolutely depends on space ; but space has no dependence on matter. For matter is a mutable substance ; but space is immutable ; and consists in the original, absolute, unchangeable and eternal *difference* between *something* and *nothing*. It is perfect in its nature, and absolutely infinite in degree. It always had the same universal and invariable existence, as it has now, before matter was produced by creation ; for there always was, in the absolute nature of things, an infinite, unalterable difference between universal existence and universal nonentity. This difference is what we call immensity : which, being of boundless magnitude, contains an infinite number of degrees, from that, which is infinitely small, to that, which is finite ; and from that, which is finite, to that, which is infinitely great. And such is its essential nature, as to admit no change, nor any alteration, in any manner whatever. Immensity is a most astonishing object ; an object which does, and always will, in respect to its magnitude, infinitely surpass the most enlarged conception of any finite mind ; even after its having been in a state of the highest degree of progressive improvement, millions of ages, multiplied by millions, in number beyond all calculation. But this is an object, which the Deity always directly and intuitively perceives, and,

without the intervention of any medium whatever, most completely comprehends, in all its extent, from the least to the greatest degree. Any finite degree of space ; or which is the same thing, the *disagreement* of any finite quantity of space with the *want of itself*, is what we call *place*. It is the universal property of every quantity of matter to exist in some place, by itself, so as to exclude every other quantity of matter from coexisting in the same place. Every part of space has a peculiar relation to the want of itself ; that is, it *disagrees* with the *want* of itself ; and this peculiar relation always remains unchangeably the same. Matter also has a relation to, that is, it disagrees with, the *want* of some part of space. And that part of space, with the *want* of which any quantity of matter *disagrees*, is the PLACE, in which the given quantity of matter actually exists. Every part of matter, therefore exists in some place. Hence *locality* is an essential property of matter.

Another property is MOBILITY. For matter, considered in itself, is imperfect. It is not a whole quantity, but it is the difference between the whole and a part. In order to constitute the whole, therefore, a part must be added to the difference ; for a part of the whole, and the difference between the whole and a part, constitute the whole itself. And that part, which is to be added to the difference, in order to make up the whole, consists in that peculiar kind of existence, which we call *motion*. This is something, which is perfectly distinct from matter, and from every modification of it. For motion is not the same as any part of matter, nor is it the same as any *change* of matter whatever. Motion, in addition to matter, constitutes the positive whole of all external mutable ex-

istence, that can be actually present, at any one time. Now since matter is not a whole quantity, but is the difference between the whole and a part, and consequently is mutable; that is, capable of being *changed*, in respect to its place; therefore it is essentially different, in its nature, from space. For every degree of space is a complete whole quantity, and absolutely immutable. Both matter and space are real SUBSTANCES, admitting of various degrees of magnitude; yet there is an essential distinction between the respective natures of these two kinds of existence; for one is imperfect and mutable, but the other is perfect and immutable. Every part of space always has an unchangeable *relation* to the *want* of itself; and since it never changes this relation; therefore, it always exists in the same place; that is, it always exists in itself; for it is the nature of it to be selfexistent. But with regard to matter, the case is different; for matter is capable of having a relation to the want of *one* part of space at *one time*, and the want of another part of space, at *another time*. Matter, therefore, being of a mutable nature, is capable of existing in a twofold state, for it is capable of admitting, in addition to itself, that kind of existence, which we call *motion*; in consequence of which it will, after having continued to exist, for a certain length of time, in one place, then change its place; and after having begun to exist in a new place, it will there continue to exist, for a certain length of time, and then it will change its place again, &c. as before. The number of changes, that will take place, in any given length of time, will always be proportional to the degree of motion, which is added to the quantity of matter in which those changes are produced; or the *effect*, consisting in

the *change* of the quantity of matter, in respect to its place, will be proportional to the *cause*, consisting in the degree of *MOTION*, which is added to the quantity of matter, which is the subject of change. And since matter is capable of admitting, in addition to itself, that kind of existence (*viz.* motion) which is the cause of its being changed, in respect to its place, therefore *mobility* is a property of matter.

Among the properties of matter must be reckoned *IMPENETRABILITY*; that is, the impossibility of the coexistence of any two quantities of matter, in the same place. For every quantity of matter always does, from the very nature of it, necessarily require a distinct place of its own, and therefore, it is impossible that any other quantity of matter should *coexist* in the same place.

It is the property of every body of matter to consist of *PARTS*. And the parts, of which it is composed, are of two kinds; *viz.* *separable* and *inseparable*. Every particular mass of matter is composed of a *finite* number of *separable* parts, which we shall call *particles*. By a particle, as the term is here used, is meant the smallest *separable part* of matter. Every particle consists of an *INFINITE NUMBER* of *inseparable parts*. Such is the nature of the inseparable parts of matter, that they cannot exist in a state of separation from each other; it therefore requires an *infinite number* of them, in a state of *union*, to compose *one particle*. A *particle* of matter corresponds to a *point* of space. Every finite magnitude of space, which consists of a finite number of points, extending one way, constitutes that kind of magnitude, which is called a *line*. Any number of *lines* constitutes *breadth*. Any number of *breadths* constitutes *thickness*.

And as *units* are the elementary parts of *number* ; so *particles* are the elementary parts of *matter*. Every particle is perfectly solid and impenetrable. Therefore, there is a universal and essential distinction between the separable and inseparable parts of matter. And consequently, *matter is not infinitely divisible*. Every quantity of matter, consisting of any number of particles, as 2, 3, 4, or 5, &c. is *divisible* ; but every part, which contains only *one particle*, is *indivisible* ; the reason is ; because all the parts of it are inseparably combined together, by unity or 1. It is the essential nature of a unit, or 1, to consist of an infinite number of *inseparable parts*. For a unit consists of 2 halves, 3 thirds, 4 fourths, 5 fifths, &c. to infinity. It is the essential nature of every unit to require a UNION of *all its parts*. Therefore, *every part* of a unit necessarily requires the addition of all the *other parts*. Consequently ; $\frac{1}{2}$ requires the addition of $\frac{1}{2}$; $\frac{1}{3}$ requires the addition of $\frac{2}{3}$; $\frac{1}{4}$ requires the addition of $\frac{3}{4}$; $\frac{1}{5}$ requires the addition of $\frac{4}{5}$; &c. to infinity. Hence it follows : That all the parts (infinite in number) of every particle of matter are *inseparably combined together*, by UNITY, or 1, which is essential to the very existence of the particle itself. Hence it is, that every particle consists of an infinite number of INSEPARABLE PARTS.

DENSITY and RARITY are properties, that belong to matter. For the real quantity of matter, which any one body contains, is always directly, as the number of particles, of which it is composed. Some bodies of *equal* magnitude, contain an *unequal* number of particles. Hence result those properties of matter, which are called *density* and *rarity*. These two properties are directly the reverse, one of the other. Thus ; if there are any two

bodies of equal magnitude, and one contains ten times as many particles as the other ; then the density of that one, which contains the greatest number of particles, is ten times as great, as that of the other. Hence arise the *specifick gravities* of the various kinds of matter ; as, platina, gold, lead, silver, iron, glass, &c.

It is the property of matter to consist of VARIOUS DIFFERENT SPECIES. And the specifick difference, subsisting between the various kinds of matter, results from the particular structure or arrangement of the several primogenial particles, of which the respective kinds of matter are composed. Therefore, let that peculiar structure, or arrangement of parts, which constitutes a *solid*, for instance, be so changed, as to be perfectly similar to that arrangement of parts, of which a *fluid* is composed ; then, that same quantity of matter, which, previous to such a change, is a *solid*, will, when the change actually takes place, become a *fluid*. And, vice versa. And we may observe, in general : That it is the peculiar internal structure or arrangement of the elementary parts, of which matter is composed, that constitutes all that diversity, which belongs to the various different species of material substances. Hence it is, that matter presents itself to our view, in such an endless variety of diversified forms ; as water, earth, stones, wood, iron, glass, lead, silver, gold, vegetables, animal bodies, &c. Hence also arise various particular properties of matter, which it is not necessary here to enumerate ; we shall, therefore, only just mention the *names* of some of them ; as roughness, smoothness, hardness, softness, &c.

Since it is impossible that any two bodies, or any two particles of matter should coexist in the same place ;

therefore EXTENSION OR MAGNITUDE is an essential property of every quantity of matter consisting of any number of particles. And since every single body of matter is of *finite* dimensions, therefore it is an essential property of every collection of particles, combined together, to have FIGURE OR FORM.

NUMBER is something, which essentially belongs to matter. And since matter, as well as space, is something, to which number essentially belongs, it will be necessary to consider the origin and nature of number; especially since all magnitudes, of the same kind, always have the same relations and properties among themselves, as the *numbers*, which belong to those magnitudes. In the next chapter, therefore, we shall take a view of the origin of NUMBER; and also make some observations on the nature of MAGNITUDE, in general, and of PLACE, in particular.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE ORIGIN AND THE NATURE OF NUMBER AND PLACE.

THE constituent parts of number are UNITS. A unit universally consists in the *connexion* of any thing with *itself*; or, which is the same, it consists in the *agreement* of the *whole* of any thing, with the *sum* of all its *parts*. A unit, therefore, is a certain peculiar kind of relation, viz. that, which consists in agreement: the *agreement* of any thing with *itself*. And among all that infinite variety of relations, which subsist, in the universal nature of

things, it is that peculiar one alone, which consists in AGREEMENT, that constitutes a *unit*. The well known character, which is substituted for the purpose of expressing this relation, is, 1. As the *connexion* of any thing with itself constitutes a unit or 1, so that, which is opposite to this, viz. the *separation* of any thing from itself, or the separation of the whole from the sum of all its parts, is what is called *nothing*; the substitute for which is 0.

Though our leading design, at present, is to exhibit a view of that kind of magnitude, which is called *matter*, and that kind of number, which essentially belongs to it; yet, since *space* is the basis, or foundation, on which matter intirely depends, it will be necessary, in order to give an intelligible explanation of the subject, to frequently introduce the idea of space, as well as that of matter..... There are two kinds of relations belonging to space. First: that, which consists in the DISAGREEMENT of space with the *want* of itself; or in its disagreement with *nothing*. Secondly: that, which consists in the AGREEMENT of every part of space with itself. The first of these relations, or that, which consists in *disagreement*, constitutes the *magnitude* of space; therefore, the greater the disagreement, the greater is the magnitude. From the other relation, or that which consists in *agreement*, originates that *number*, which essentially belongs to the parts of space; for the agreement of every part with itself, constitutes one unit.

Matter, as well as space, has a *twofold relation*. First: that, which consists in the disagreement of *matter* with the *want* of space. This constitutes the *magnitude* of matter. The more disagreement, therefore, any quantity

of matter has with the *want* of any part of *space*, the greater is its magnitude or dimensions; and consequently, the larger is the extent of space, which it requires, for the *place* of its existence. Secondly: that relation, which consists in the *agreement* of every part of matter with itself. From this originates that kind of *number*, which essentially belongs to the parts of matter.

Hence there are two perfectly distinct kinds of *magnitude*, and therefore, there are two perfectly distinct kinds of *number*, which we shall distinguish, by calling the first, *geometrical*, and the other, *arithmetical*. The agreement of any magnitude of *space* with itself, constitutes a geometrical unit; and any collection of such units, constitutes a geometrical number. But the agreement of any magnitude of *matter* with itself, constitutes an arithmetical unit; and any collection of such units, constitutes an arithmetical number. There is an infinite number of *each* of these two kinds of *units*; and therefore, there is an infinite number of each of those two kinds of *magnitude*, to which the two kinds of number respectively relate; for all number is of a relative nature; it relates to SOMETHING. Because every unit (and units are the essential constituent parts of number) universally consists in the agreement of SOMETHING with itself.... We are not, however, to suppose, that, with regard to those two infinite numbers, the latter is any thing, exclusive of the former. For, as all matter is contained *in* space; so all arithmetical number is contained *in* that, which is of the geometrical kind.

It is the universal nature of space, to disagree with the want of itself; and, in this disagreement, its magnitude consists; and therefore, it has a real existence. Be-

cause that, which has no actual existence, has no actual disagreement with the want of itself. That space *disagrees* with the *want* of itself, and therefore really exists, is evident; for if this was not the case; then it would have no *agreement* with itself, and therefore, there would be no such thing as *number*, with relation to space. But there is number, even infinite number; and therefore, universal space has a real existence: that is; there is absolute, universal, immutable, and eternal *existence*, in a state of perfect disagreement with absolute, universal *nonentity*. And the whole disagreement, or difference, between real immutable existence, and the want of existence, is completely perfect, in its nature, and absolutely infinite, in its degree. And this is that kind of existence, which we call immensity, considered in itself, independent of that other kind of existence, which we call matter. Hence there are two perfectly distinct kinds of existence, viz. immutable and mutable; and to each of these belong magnitude and number. There are, indeed, other things, to which number relates; for number, or at least unity, or 1, has an essential relation to every kind of existence; because every thing has an agreement with itself; but we are now taking an intellectual view of that, to which, not only *number*, but also *magnitude*, belongs. But here, language, composed of *words* only, immediately discovers its own imperfection. Because such language was originally formed for the purpose of expressing *sensible* objects; and therefore, whenever it is applied to those, which belong to the immaterial, or *intellectual* system, it becomes figurative. And, therefore, exposes those, who are wholly confined to the use of it, to the danger of being led into error, in the course of their

reasonings. It is, therefore, at least, very convenient, if not absolutely necessary, sometimes, instead of *words*, to introduce *symbols*, together with certain marks, or characters, expressive of the various relations of things, for the purpose of communicating ideas, relative to scientific subjects. And here it may be observed; That, when we have recourse to symbols, instead of common words, it makes not the least difference, whether the individual visible quantities, made use of in substitution, have, or have not, when considered simply in themselves, any kind of *resemblance* to the real objects, for which they are substituted. We are, therefore, at perfect liberty to assume, for the purpose of substitution, any individual quantities, which we please. It must always, however, be carefully considered, that particular quantities, (whatever they may be *in themselves*) as soon as they are actually *substituted*, and as long as they retain the character of *substitutes*, are so far from being arbitrary or indifferent, that they have the very *same nature*, and the *same properties*, as the *real objects*, for which they are *substituted*; because they then have a real coincidence, or union, with their respective objects. This remark is general, and will universally apply, in all cases, with regard to the doctrine of substitution, and it is of much greater value and importance, than what would, at first view, be apt to be conceived. For it is, by substitution alone, that we are enabled to extend our views beyond the narrow circle of sensible appearances, and take a prospect of the intellectual world. We shall now return to the consideration of magnitude and number. There are, as we have observed, two perfectly distinct kinds of existence, to which magnitude belongs; one is an ori-

ginal immutable existence, but the other is a created mutable quantity, which, in the original state of things, had no actual existence.

Let m be substituted for any finite degree of space, and let n be the substitute for any one body of matter; and let y be an infinite number. Then, with regard to *finite* numbers, certain marks, or characters, called *figures*, or *digits*, have *already* been introduced, and are become so common, as to be generally understood. Thus; 1 is the well known substitute for a *unit*; 2 is the substitute for the *sum* of two units; 3 is the substitute for the sum of three units, &c. But since there is not, in common use, any one particular symbol, expressive of an *infinite* number, we have, in order to answer the present design, assumed y , for that purpose. We might, indeed, just as well, have selected any other mark, or letter; but this one, being actually substituted for an infinite number, must be considered as being the very same as, and therefore as having all the properties of, the real object, with which, by substitution, it is now coincident. And therefore, whatever is affirmed or denied, of a real infinite number, must be affirmed or denied, of its substitute, which, in the present case, is y . And the same observation will apply, with respect to every substitute. For every substitute has the very same *nature* and properties, as its *real object*. And by the object of substitution is meant, that, whatever it is, for which any thing is substituted.

To express the *relations*, belonging to magnitude and number, certain marks or characters have already been introduced, and are generally known as substitutes. Such are the following: \div (with) $-$ (minus) $+$ (plus) \times (into)

These marks or signs are used for the purpose of expressing connexion, separation, addition, and multiplication.

We have already observed ; That every substitute has the same nature and properties as the real object, to which it relates. Thus m , being substituted for an *immutable*, and n for a *mutable*, magnitude ; 1 being substituted for a unit ; 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. being substituted for *finite* numbers : y being substituted for an *infinite* number ; and the characters \div , $—$, $+$, \times , &c. being substituted for *connexion*, *separation*, *addition*, and *multiplication*, are all the *very same* as their respective *objects*. Hence, through the medium of these substitutes (or any others, that we may have occasion to introduce) we can prosecute the same train of reasoning, with equal certainty, as if the real things themselves, to which the substitutes respectively relate, were actually present. And thus we can hold an intercourse, or carry on a correspondence, with distant objects, that belong to the material universe, or the invisible realities of the intellectual system.

In the connexion of m with itself, expressed thus ; $m \div m$, consists that kind of UNIT, which we call *geometrical*, and which has a peculiar relation to m ; a collection of units of this kind constitutes a geometrical number. In the separation of m from itself, expressed thus ; $m — m$, consists the WANT of m . And the well known mark or character, which has been introduced for the purpose of expressing the *want* of any thing, is 0. Hence $m \div m$ is the same as 1, and $m — m$ is the same as 0. In the disagreement of m with the *want* of itself, that is, in the *difference* between m and $m — m$, consists m itself.

Therefore this disagreement or difference constitutes immaterial or immutable magnitude ; otherwise called *space*. This kind of magnitude, when considered in any finite degree, is called *place* ; and always remains unchangeably the same, whether it does, or does not, contain any degree of matter. And since it is immutable, in every degree, from the least to the greatest, therefore, the whole of it is absolutely immutable. Every degree of it has an agreement or connexion with itself, and therefore there is an infinite *number* of *agreements*. But since there is only one *universal whole*, and this has only ONE AGREEMENT with itself ; therefore there is ONE UNIVERSAL AGREEMENT. And as every degree of magnitude, both in the mutable and immutable system, is contained in the one universal, infinite magnitude, called, *immensity* ; so every agreement, relative to material and immaterial magnitude, is contained in the ONE absolute, universal, immutable, and eternal AGREEMENT of *immensity with itself*. In the agreement or connexion of n with itself, expressed thus ; $n \div n$, consists that kind of *unit*, which we call *arithmetical*, and which has a peculiar relation to n . And a collection of units of this kind constitutes an *arithmetical number*. In the separation of n from itself, expressed thus ; $n - n$, consists the *want* of n . Hence $n \div n$ is the same as 1, and $n - n$ is the same as 0.

We have substituted m for any one degree of space, and n , for any one quantity of matter ; but since there is, in immensity, more than one finite degree of space, and more than any one finite quantity of matter ; therefore, other substitutes, in addition to those already introduced, will be required. And, this being the case, let

m be any *one* finite degree of space, as before ; and let p be any *other* finite degree. Again ; let n , as before, be any *one* quantity of matter, and let q be any *other* quantity. Then m is what we call *one place*, and p is *another* ; m and p , therefore, are two distinct places. Again ; n is one quantity of matter, and q is another. And since m and p , each of them, has an agreement or connexion with itself, thus ; $m \div m$ and $p \div p$, therefore, these two agreements are two *geometrical units*, the sum of which constitutes the geometrical number, *two* ; that is, $1 \times 2 \div 1$. Again ; since n and q , each of them, has an agreement with itself, thus ; $n \div n$ and $q \div q$, therefore, these two agreements are the same as two *arithmetical units*, the sum of which makes the arithmetical number, *two* ; that is, $1 + 2 - 1$. And as all matter is contained *in* space ; so all arithmetical number, relative to the various quantities of matter, is contained *in* the geometrical number, which relates to the various degrees of space. Since the two places, m and p are immutable ; therefore they never change places ; but each of them always continues to exist in the same place ; or, in its *own place* ; that is, each one of them eternally exists in itself. But the case with respect to the two bodies of matter, n and q is intirely different. For *they* are capable of being *changed*, in regard to their respective *places*, in consequence of the admission of that limitary existence, which we call MOTION. To this peculiar kind of existence, we have applied the epithet, *limitary*, to denote the nature of it, as being that, which, when it is added to any body of matter, *limits* the *time* of its *continuing* to exist in any one place. Therefore, the *greater* the degree of MOTION, which is added to any body of matter, the *shorter*

will be the *TIME* of its *continuing* to exist, in the same place, in which it has, at any *one time*, *begun* to exist. And vice versa.

If *n*, at any *one time*, exists in the place, *m*; and *q*, at the *same time*, exists in the place, *p*; then *n* may, at *another time*, exist in the place, *p*; and *q* in the place, *m*. And whenever this comes to be the case, then *n* and *q* will both be changed, in regard to their respective places. Therefore, when it is said, That there may be a change of place, it must not be understood, that *place itself* can ever admit of any change; but that *matter* may be changed, in respect to its place. Hence one of the properties of matter, as we have already observed (chap. i.) is *mobility*; that is, a *capacity* of admitting the addition of *motion*; in consequence of which it will be changed, with respect to its local situation. The *antecedent*, or that peculiar kind of existence, which *precedes* the actual change of any body of matter, is what we call *motion*; but for the *consequent*, that is, the actual *change itself*, we have no single appropriate term. For, having selected the term, *motion*, to denote the *CAUSE*, we cannot, with any propriety, make use of the *same* term, to express the *EFFECT*. And therefore, we must either introduce into the language, a new term, for the purpose of designating the *consequence*, of which motion is the *ANTECEDENT*; or else we must, when treating on this subject, make use of circumlocution. For motion does not consist in a change of matter, in respect to its place; but it is the *antecedent*, of which *that change* is the *consequence*.

Let the antecedent, consisting in the addition of any degree of motion to any body of matter, be admitted; and then, the proper consequence, consisting in the

change of that body of matter, in respect to its place, will follow. For the Deity does, as we have before repeatedly observed, always exert his power, in producing effects, in the various parts of the material and mental system, according to the *actual state* of things. When, therefore, there really is, in the actual state of things, any degree of motion, in addition to matter; then, the Supreme Agent, who regulates and governs all events, throughout the whole of the material universe, will produce, for there will then be a proper reason, or CAUSE, why he should produce a correspondent EFFECT, consisting in a proportionable change of matter, in respect to its place. This *change* of matter intirely consists in its *beginning* to exist, in a *different* place. For it is evident, that matter, as long as it *continues* to exist in any *one* place, is never the subject of any actual change. The CONTINUANCE of matter, in any *one* place, is denominated REST; but for that CHANGE of matter, in respect to its place, which consists in its BEGINNING to exist, in a *different* place, and which is an *effect*, of which MOTION is the *cause*, the language, in common use, does not, as we said before, furnish any appropriate term. The change of matter, in respect to its place, is, as we have just been observing, an *effect*, of which motion is the *cause*; and what is the CAUSE of motion, or what is the *reason* why the Deity produces motion, will be particularly considered, in the subsequent pages of this work, in which we shall treat on the doctrine of GRAVITATION, OR GRAVITY.

If it is true, at *any one time*, that the two bodies of matter, *n* and *q*, exist, *one* in the place, *m*, and the *other* in the place, *p*; then it may be true, at *another time*, that

m exists in p ; and q in m . Or thus; if n exists in m , and q exists in p ; then n may be so changed, in respect to its place, as to exist in p instead of m ; and q may be so changed, as to exist in m , instead of p . If x is any quantity of matter, that exists in *any place* whatever; and z is a quantity of matter, that exists in the *same place* with x ; then z has no distinction from x . Therefore, if z has any distinction from x ; then it does not exist in the same place. For it is as much impossible, that *two different* bodies should exist in *one* place, at the same time, as it is, that *one* body should, at the *same time*, exist in *two different* places. Both of these propositions are equally evident; and each of them is too evident to admit of any *proof*; because each of them is selfevident.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE EXTENT OF THE UNIVERSE.

HAVING taken a view of some of the general properties of MATTER, and also considered the nature of number and place, as being essential to its existence, we shall now proceed to a consideration of its boundless extent; or the infinite number of bodies of which the material universe is composed. This will give some idea of the amazing power of the Almighty Creator of innumerable worlds; and consequently, may subserve the purpose of leading the serious contemplative mind to admit the solemn thought, respecting what inconceivably delightful or dreadful effects this Omnipotent Being

can produce, with regard to those, who are strictly accountable to him for all their conduct; how high he can raise, in happiness, or how low he can sink in misery, the obedient or rebellious subjects of his moral government.

It has been observed (chap. 2.) that there are two distinct kinds of UNITS, viz. *geometrical* and *arithmetical*; the first of which relates to *space*; and the other to *matter*. Hence there are two kinds of *number*; and each of them extends to infinity. There is, therefore, an infinite number of degrees of space; the greatest or highest of which is *immensity*. There is, also, an infinite number of bodies of matter; the whole collection of which constitutes the *material universe*. In order to exhibit an idea of the distinct nature, and the infinite extent of geometrical and arithmetical numbers, and consequently, of the real magnitudes, to which they respectively relate, we shall first set down a series of simple *units* of each kind. The first series will consist of geometrical, and the second of arithmetical, *units*.

Let y be an infinite number: then we shall have the two following series of simple units, each extending to infinity.

(1) $1 \div 1 : 2 \div 2 : 3 \div 3$, &c. ad infinitum. Geomet.

(2) $1 - 0 : 2 - 1 : 3 - 2$, &c. ad infinitum. Arithmet.

Here it is evident, that the last term of the first series, being infinitely continued, will be $y \div y$: and the last term of the second series will be $y - y$. Hence there is an infinite number of geometrical UNITS; the first of which is $1 \div 1$, the second $2 \div 2$, the third $3 \div 3$, &c. to $y \div y$ There is also an infinite number of arithmetical *units*;

the first of which is $1-0$, the second, $2-1$; the third is $3-2$, &c. to $y-y$.

We shall now proceed to take a view of the two following infinite series; in each of which, the first stage of the increasing progression will express the *sum* of *two* units; the second stage will express the *sum* of *three* units, &c. to the *last stage*, which will contain the *whole*, that is, an *infinite number* of units.

(1) $1+2\div 1 : 2+3\div 2 : 3+4\div 3$, &c. ad infinitum.
Geometrical.

(2) $1\times 2-1 : 2\times 3-2 : 3\times 4-3$, &c. ad infinitum.
Arithmetical.

It is evident, from inspection, that every stage in each of these two infinite series, consists of three simple terms.

Thus; in the first stage, the first term is 1, the second 2, and the third 1; in the second stage, the first term is 2, the second, 3, and the third, 2, &c. In order therefore, to carry on each series to its utmost extent, we must continually advance from stage to stage, till we arrive to that, in which the first term is equal to the second.

It is evident, that in the first stage, the first term is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the second; in the second stage, the first term is equal to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the second; in the third stage the first term is equal to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the second, &c. Hence it is evident, that as we advance from one stage to another, in the ascending the scale of increasing progression, the first term, in every stage, continually approximates to an equality with the second, till it finally comes to a state of perfect coincidence. Therefore the series of geometrical numbers. $1\times 2\div 1 : 2\times 3\div 2 : 3\times 4\div 3$, &c.

must be continued, till the last stage becomes $y \times y \div y$. And the series of arithmetical numbers must be continued till we come to $y+y-y$. Here it is evident: That, in the first stage ($1 \times 2 \div 1$) of the first series, we have the *sum* of two geometrical units; and this *sum* constitutes the *number* that belongs to the *sum* of two degrees of *space*, every way extended. In the second stage ($2 \times 3 \div 2$) of the first series, we have the sum of three geometrical units; and this sum constitutes the *number* that belongs to the *sum* of *three* degrees of space, &c..... In the last stage ($y \times y \div y$) of the first series, we have the sum of an infinite number of geometrical units; and this infinite number essentially belongs to the absolute *sum* of all the degrees of space; which *absolute sum*, every way extending to *infinity*, constitutes a *whole immensity*. And also in the first stage ($1+2-1$) of the *second* series, we have the sum of two *arithmetical* units; and this sum constitutes the *number*, that belongs to the sum of two *bodies* of *matter*. In the second stage ($2+3-2$) of the *second* series, we have the sum of three arithmetical units; and this sum constitutes the number, that belongs to the sum of three bodies of matter, &c. In the last stage, ($y+y-y$) of the *second* series, we have the whole sum of an infinite number of arithmetical units; and this sum constitutes the number, that belongs to the sum of an infinite number of bodies of matter. And this infinite sum constitutes that stupendous collection of solid masses of matter, of which the whole *material universe* consists; a collection so vast, and so widely extended, that nothing less than immensity can contain all the parts of which it is composed. Well might the poet say;

“An *undevout* astronomer is mad.”

Who is there, that has once raised his eye from the surface of this small globe, on which we dwell, that can forbear to prostrate himself, with the profoundest awe, and reverential fear, before that adorable Being, whose single exertion produced the amazing whole !

When we take a view of the first series of numbers ($1 \times 2 \div 1 : 2 \times 3 \div 2 : 3 \times 4 \div 3$, &c.) and consider the *nature* of it, though we can plainly see, at once, the impossibility of tracing it, step by step, in a gradual process, to its utmost extent, because this would absolutely require a whole eternity ; yet we are, notwithstanding, irresistibly led to the conclusion, that it is a most *certain*, and we need not hesitate to say, a most *solemn*, truth, that there is, *in reality*, such a series. And so likewise, with regard to the second series ($1+2-1 : 2+3-2 : 3+4-3$, &c.) the same general observation will equally apply. When, with respect to the two series, we consider the several stages of the increasing progression, through which each of them advances, and see, that the first gradation is only a *part* of the second ; the second only a *part* of the third, &c. the conviction is too strong to be resisted, that, in the final result, there is an *absolute whole* ; and that, from the very nature of the series, this absolute whole is infinite. For in the first stage of the progression we find the number, *two* ; in the second, the number, *three*, and so on to infinity. Now every one of these numbers is *relative* ; it is a number of *real things* ; for any number of *nothings* is *no number*. What those real things are, to which the several numbers, in each series, respectively relate, has already been shown. Therefore, there is an essential distinction between an *infinite*, and every *finite*, number. This is evident from the fol-

lowing consideration. There is always a *difference* between any two finite numbers; as, 1 and 2, or 2 and 3, &c. when they are measured by any finite number; but, when they are measured by an infinite number, there is *no difference*. For the illustration and proof of this remark (a remark which, when duly considered in its practical application, will be found to be of very interesting importance) let us first take 1 and 2, and see what ratio, or what proportion, they have to any finite numbers; such, for instance, as 2, 3, 4, 5, &c.

(1) Let 1 and 2 be compared with 2. Then the ratio of 1 to 2 is $1 \div 2$, or $\frac{1}{2}$; but the ratio of 2 to 2 is $2 \div 2$, or, 1. The difference between the two ratios, therefore, in this case, is $1 - \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{2}$.

(2) Let 1 and 2 be compared with 3. Then the ratio of 1 to 3 is $1 \div 3$, or $\frac{1}{3}$; but the ratio of 2 to 3 is $2 \div 3$, or, $\frac{2}{3}$. The difference, therefore, between the two ratios is $\frac{2}{3} - \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{3}$.

(3) Let 1 and 2 be compared with 4. Then the ratio of 1 to 4 is $1 \div 4$, or, $\frac{1}{4}$; but the ratio of 2 to 4 is $2 \div 4$, or, $\frac{2}{4}$. Therefore the difference between the two ratios is $\frac{2}{4} - \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{4}$.

Hence it is evident: that the *greater* any number is, with which 1 and 2 are compared, the *less* is the *difference* between 1 and 2, in respect to the number, with which they are compared. And the case is the same, with regard to the comparative difference between 2 and 3; 3 and 4; or 4 and 5, &c. ad infinitum. For the series of differences between 1 and 2, in respect to 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. is $\frac{1}{2} : \frac{1}{3} : \frac{1}{4} : \frac{1}{5}$, &c. Or, which is the same, it is $1 - \frac{1}{2} : 1 - \frac{2}{3} : 1 - \frac{3}{4} : 1 - \frac{4}{5}$, &c. And, on the same principle, the series of differences between 2 and 3, in

respect to 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. is $\frac{1}{3} : \frac{1}{4} : \frac{1}{5} : \frac{1}{6}$, &c. That is; $1 - \frac{2}{3} : 1 - \frac{3}{4} : 1 - \frac{4}{5} : 1 - \frac{5}{6}$, &c. to the last term, which is $1 - 1 = 0$. Consequently, the difference between 1 and 2, 2 and 3, or 3 and 4, &c. in respect to an *infinite number*, is $1 - 1$, that is, 0. In respect to AN INFINITE NUMBER, therefore, we always have $1 = 2 = 3 = 4 = 5$, &c. ad infinitum.

From the preceding induction, will follow the unavoidable consequence; That an infinite number has the *property* of being *greater* than any finite number; and therefore, it is really *something*; for *nothing* has no *properties*. And an infinite number is not only really *something*, in distinction from *nothing*; but it is also of a *relative* nature; it is a number *of something*. But though number is always relative, and necessarily implies some real thing, or collection of things, distinct from the number itself; yet since it has such a general and universal application, it is not always necessary to expressly mention, or particularly specify, the things to which the number belongs. Thus, when it is said; That twice two is four; the proposition is certainly true; even though, in this case, nothing but *number alone* is actually expressed. For the import of this proposition *really is*, and is *always understood to be*, That twice *two things* is the same as the collective sum of *four things*; whatever the things may be; whether they are yards, or miles, or leagues; trees, or rocks, or grains of sand, or drops of water, &c. And hence it is, that all operations in arithmetick may be performed, so as to form a true result, by the expression of *numbers only*, without particularly specifying the *things*, to which the numbers relate. But then, it must be remembered, that numbers always do, in reality, relate to

things, distinct from the *numbers themselves*; whether those distinct numerical things are, or are not, actually expressed.

Let y be an infinite number. Then it is evident, from the preceding observations, that 1 is an infinite number of times contained in y ; 2 is also an infinite number of times contained in y ; and the same is equally true of 3, 4, 5, &c. That is; every *finite* number is an infinite number of times, contained in an *infinite* number. For we have shown, that, in respect to an infinite number, $1=2=3$, &c. because 1, 2, 3, &c. all have the very same ratio to an infinite number; to express which number we have substituted y . Consequently; $1:y::2:y$; $2:y::3:y$, &c. in geom. propor. And also; $0 \cdot y::1 \cdot y$; $0 \cdot y::2 \cdot y$, &c. in arithm. propor. And from what has been observed, respecting matter, number, and magnitude, it is evident; That it requires an infinite number of *inseparable* parts to compose one *separable* part, or that which we have called a *particle* of matter; a finite number of *particles* to compose one *body*; a finite number of *bodies* to compose one *particular system*; and an infinite number of *systems* to constitute THE WHOLE MATERIAL UNIVERSE. Hence it follows; That the *whole* system of matter, contained in IMMENSITY, and consisting of vast ponderous bodies, at a distance from each other, is, in length, breadth, height, and depth, every way INFINITELY extended. What an amazing prospect does this open to view! And how inconceivably great must be the power of HIM, who is the sole

Author "of this immeasurable mass

"Of matter multiform; or dense, or rare,

"Opaque, or lucid; rapid, or at rest;

T 2

“ Minute, or passing bound ! In each extreme,
“ Of like amaze and mystery to man.”

Though a universe, consisting of an infinite number of worlds, is too great...infinitely too great, for any finite comprehension ; yet it does not follow, from this, that we cannot obtain a *certainty* of its *reality*. We cannot *comprehend* a Being of infinite, immutable, and eternal perfection ; yet we may *certainly know*, that such a Being does *actually exist*. “ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are CLEARLY seen, being UNDERSTOOD by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” (Rom. i. 20.) Those, therefore, that remain destitute of the knowledge of his existence ; or, having such knowledge, refuse to regulate their conduct accordingly, are altogether inexcusable.

It is very wonderful to think, how vast is the extent of only that part of the universe, which can be discovered by the natural sight. For those fixed stars, which, by their own native light, emitted from *them* to *us*, the eye, without any artificial assistance, can actually see, are above four hundred thousand times more distant from *us*, than *we* are from the *Sun*, which is the centre of that particular system, to which our earth belongs ; and therefore, they are at the amazing distance of more than thirty eight millions of millions of miles. If this was not the case, the fact would have been ascertained, by the accurate and repeated observations, which astronomers have had opportunities of making for this purpose. For we are carried by the earth, in its annual orbit round the sun, more than one hundred and ninety millions of miles nearer to the fixed stars, at one time of the year, than at

another; but yet their apparent magnitudes, situations, and distances from each other, remain the same. That circle, which has our earth for its centre, and the circumference of which passes through those vastly great and distant globes of fire, that we actually behold, whenever we view the stars, is more than seventy-six millions of millions of miles in diameter. And since the fixed stars could not be seen from such a distance, by reflected light; they are, therefore, suns, and each encircled with a system of revolving planets. But the Deity, without the instrumentality or concurrence of any finite agent, by one immense *exertion*, called the *word* of his *power*, produced, at once, from a state of nonexistence, the whole material universe, extending above, below, around, on every side, through all the vast infinitude of space. The long duration of millions of ages, multiplied by millions of millions more, will be infinitely too short for any finite being, of the most enlarged capacity, to finish a first single view of all the various parts of this stupendous work. “In the BEGINNING God created the heaven and the earth. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He spoke and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast.” (Gen. i. 1. Psal. xxxiii. 6.) “He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.” (Jer. li. 15.) “Praise him, ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created.” (Psal. cxlviii. 4, 5.)

Though it appears, from the Mosaic account, that a certain *length of time* was required, for the due arrange-

ment of the several parts of the material system, to which our earth belongs ; yet there is no evidence, that the creation of matter itself, was an operation, performed by a gradual process. For it was not the production of matter, considered in itself, but that of the various *changes*, of which it is susceptible, which must be a progressive work, requiring length of time. Matter alone, or matter without motion, requires, for the basis of its existence, nothing but only extent of space ; and therefore, an infinite number of bodies, interspersed through immensity, may all exist, at one time, without having been produced, one after another, in succession. And this is, in fact, the case ; for, otherwise, there would be an infinite expansion, in which no matter is contained. Hence it follows ; That the number of real bodies of matter, of which the material universe is composed, is infinitely great. Therefore, should a person set out, and proceed, in a direct line, with the swiftness of a ray of light, still moving forward, with unabated rapidity, he never would, within the limits of any finite duration, arrive, to where the remotest body of matter exists.

That the Deity was invested with original power to produce, and that it was perfectly consistent with the universal nature of things, that he should produce, all at one time, a system of matter, consisting of an infinite number of worlds, must be granted by all, who possess any degree of rational reflection. And, this being admitted, it will follow ; *that he has actually done it*. Because no satisfactory reason can be assigned for the confirmation of the negative side of the question. But *now*, since matter is *actually* created, and finite beings have entered on the stage of action, he is continually making

successive exertions of his power, in the production of particular effects, according to the *actual state* of things. With regard to particular effects, therefore, especially those in the moral world, which imply the happiness or misery of perceptive beings, we cannot argue, merely from the original *power* of the Deity, to his *actual exertion* of it, in the production of those effects, to which his original power related. He had the original power of securing the perfect happiness of every individual, who was ever capable of being happy; and this was intirely agreeable to his nature, and consistent with his universal plan of operation. From his having had such an original power, it does not follow, however, that it has been *actually exerted* for that purpose; because a particular *reason*, consisting in a violation of the moral law, and a final rejection of the gospel, has intervened to prevent it. Some events, therefore, respecting which it was, in the ORIGINAL STATE of things, perfectly consistent with the universal plan of divine operation, that they *should* have been introduced, have now, for *reasons* implied in the *conduct* of finite agents, become for ever impossible. The complete and eternal happiness of all perceptive beings, is an event of this kind: it is *now too late* for them *all* to be *happy*. For, finite free agents being brought into the account, the case is intirely altered, respecting the particular exertions of divine power, from what it would have been, if no such beings had been in existence, or if those, who *do exist*, had conducted *differently* from what they have *actually done*. To say, that the conduct of finite agents makes no difference, with respect to the conduct of the Deity, in the particular exertions of his power, is the same, as to say, that he pays no regard to their

conduct ; and therefore, that the manner of their conducting towards him, is a matter of indifference. But this, it is evident, is infinitely far from being the true state of the case. And therefore, the conduct of finite agents makes an essential difference, with regard to the conduct of the Deity, in the particular exertions of his original power, relative to the events of the moral world, and the changes of which the system of matter, now since it is actually created, is susceptible. But since neither the conduct of finite agents, nor the instrumentality of any particular existence whatever, is to be brought into the account, with respect to the first creation of the material universe, no reason can be assigned, why the Deity should not have done, at once, the whole, which the nature of the case admitted to be done. It follows, therefore, that he did, all at one time, actually exert his power, to its fullest extent, in diffusing through immensity, an infinite number of solid masses of matter, in endless variety. And this conclusion is perfectly consentaneous, to what has been already ascertained, by the new discoveries, that have been gradually made, of worlds beyond worlds, meeting the eye of the astonished observer, according as the wonderful art of improving the sight, for taking a view of distant objects, has been progressively advanced.

Look up ; the boundless firmament survey ;
And view those orbs, that shine with native ray :
Prepare your glasses ; fix your wondering eyes :
Millions, beyond the former millions, rise !
And millions more blaze from remoter skies !

What an amazing work is this ! and how inexpressibly happy must be the state of those, who will have a

whole eternity allotted them, for the purpose of their enjoying the inestimable privilege of loving, adoring and serving their Almighty Creator, and for ever contemplating, with increasing admiration and delight, the endless effects of his Omnipotent power ! But O ! what tongue can express, or mind conceive, the wretched condition of those of the opposite class, who are irrecoverably lost in a state of utter darkness and hopeless misery ! Being totally excluded from every comfortable, and every pleasing prospect, and absolutely confined to a dreadful prison, from which there is no release, their situation is infinitely worse than if there was no created existence, nor any Creator. It can, therefore, never answer any valuable purpose, even to mention their horrible case, but only as it may serve, as a salutary warning to such, as are now in a state of infinite danger, but have not yet received their final destiny ; that they may, before it is for ever too late, be excited “ to flee from the wrath to come.” (Mat. iii. 7.)

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE NATURE OF CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

WE have now taken a general view of *one* kind of existence ; viz. MATTER, which the Omnipotent Creator, by an instantaneous exertion of his power, originally produced. But, having created the material universe, he did not leave the various parts to themselves to remain for ever in a state of inactivity. But he did, from the beginning, and does still, actuate all the wheels of the

vast machine. And his incessant energetic influence extends to every particle of matter contained in the whole of the boundless system. It is very amazing to view, with the eye of contemplation, that infinite number of worlds, which are distributed, in regular order, through the various parts of immensity. And it is yet more amazing, if there can be any room for more amazement, to consider them all, as having been for years, and thousands of years, in a state of rapid motion ; and not merely a *simple* motion, but one of such a *complicated* nature, as to require a continued series of new exertions of power. The Deity, when he created the universe, put forth one exertion of power, extending through the immeasurable regions of unlimited space ; and now he is putting forth, not one exertion only, but a continual series of exertions ; each one of which is as extensive as the first. And if it should be inquired, Why the Deity did, at first, exert his power in the production of the material universe ? we answer : First ; That there was *no particular* reason ; or in other words, the Deity, in the first exertion of his power, had no respect to any particular existence, nor to the actual conduct of any finite agents. For previous to the creation of the universe, neither any particular existence, nor any finite agents were introduced ; and this being the case, there was no *particular* reason, why he should exert his power. But secondly ; there was a *general* reason, viz. because it was perfectly consistent with his glorious nature, and his universal plan of operation. After the universe was actually created, the Deity exerted his power, and still continues to exert it, according to the actual state of things. But previous to the creation, there was no such *particular* actual state of things, as that,

which now exists. There is, therefore, now, not only a *general* reason, but there are also, *particular* reasons, or *causes*, why the Deity exerts his power, as he does, in the production of those various *effects*, which are continually taking place. And, in order to know what those reasons or causes are, we must take a view of the *actual state* of things. And this he has not only *permitted* us to do, but has also given a very *express direction* for the purpose. “Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel and his Maker, Ask of me things to come concerning my sons, and concerning THE WORK OF MY HANDS, command ye me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all them, that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.” (Isa. xlv. 11, 12. Psal. cxi.)

With respect to those amazing masses of matter, infinite in number, extending through the vast infinitude of space, there is, as we have said, a *general*, but no *particular*, reason, to be assigned for that exertion of divine power, by which they were all originally produced. But *now*, since the universe is actually created, the case is essentially altered, from what it was before; for now the Deity has a special regard to “the work of his hands.” And therefore, a particular reason is now to be assigned for the peculiar manner of his exerting his power, as he does, in the production of that endless variety of successive changes, which are continually taking place, in

that mutable existence, called *matter*, the whole of which he at first created by one instantaneous exertion. For *now* the various parts of the universal material system, are *all* to be brought into the account, and *all* to be considered, as being what they *actually are*. Therefore, in considering the various *changes*, of which the parts of matter are susceptible, as well as the *creation* of matter itself, the DEITY, as being the UNIVERSAL AGENT, must always be brought into view. For it is intirely by the exertion of HIS power, that they are all produced. But then, it must be carefully observed ; That the divine power is exerted, with relation to the material system, according to what that system actually is. For the Deity, as we said before, has a special regard to the work of his hands. Therefore, his operations, in producing particular effects, are performed according to certain rules, or laws, which, when considered with reference to natural things, consisting of inanimate substances, are denominated *laws of nature* ; or, more properly, *laws of divine operation*.

What are called *secondary* causes, are not to be supposed to have, in themselves, any inherent efficacy ; but they are to be considered, as being *reasons*, according to which the Deity sees fit to exert his own power. For secondary causes are *antecedents*, according to which the Supreme Agent, by the exertion of his original power, actually produces correspondent *consequences*. It is never the case, that a secondary cause does, in itself, exert any power ; but it is the *reason*, or *cause*, according to which, the *Deity himself exerts his own power*, in the production of a correspondent *effect*. Therefore, whenever any change, whether great or small, near or remote, is exhi-

bited to your view, remember....God is there ! And let this solemn consideration impress your mind with an indelible sentiment of the profoundest awe, and deepest reverential fear.

From the observations, that have been made, it follows : That because there were, previous to the creation of the universe, no such particular antecedents, as there are now ; therefore, though there was a *general*, yet there was not then, as there is now, any *particular* reason for the exertion of divine power. This observation will, perhaps, lead you to repeat the inquiry ; What was the *general* reason or cause, of the *first* exertion of the divine power, relative to the mutable system ? We answer as before : That it was, in the original state of things, perfectly *consistent* with the adorable nature and all the glorious perfections of the Deity ; that a material universe, as extensive as immensity, should be created ; that a number of perceptive beings should be introduced into it ; that they should be rendered capable of being eternally happy in the complete enjoyment of the ever blessed Jehovah ; and that the infinite sum of all good should be, without any exception, unalterably *secured* to them all. This was the *general* reason why the Deity exerted the first act of his creative power. And certainly a higher or better reason cannot possibly be conceived. But *now*, since the material universe has been *actually created*, and a number of perceptive beings have been introduced into it ; the Almighty Creator, therefore, who always regards every thing as being what it really is, *now* continually exerts his power, according to the *actual state* of things ; of which he always forms, without any possibility of mistake, a most exact estimate. For he

takes into the account every particle of matter, throughout the whole of the immense system; and likewise all the actions of every finite mind. He has, therefore, “weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. The Lord weigheth the spirits. And by him ACTIONS are weighed,” (Isa. xl. 12. Prov. xvi. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 3.)

Though it is, in every sense, most strictly true, that “there is no power but of God;” (Rom. xiii. 1.) yet it is equally true, that, in the EXERTION of his power, he has a special regard to the various parts of inanimate existence, in the material system; and to the conduct of finite free agents, in the moral world. In the former case, he operates according to *natural*, and in the latter, according to *moral*, causes; and, in all cases, he does, *by the exertion of his own power*, produce *consequences* or *effects*, according to their respective *antecedents* or *causes*. And since the material universe is actually created, and perceptive beings have been introduced into existence, the distinction between a natural and a moral cause (according to the sense in which we use the terms) universally consists in this, which is now to be explained.

1. Every *natural* cause is to be considered in a two-fold view; viz. as being a consequent and an antecedent; in one view of it, therefore, it is an *effect*, and in the other, it is a *cause*. Thus *matter* is a *consequent*, resulting from the exertion of divine power; in this view of it, therefore, it is an *effect*. *Matter* is also an *antecedent*, according to which the Deity, in some particular cases, exerts his power; matter, therefore, in this view of it, is a *cause*. There is one kind of effect, resulting from the exertion of divine power, which the Deity would never

have produced, if there had been no such thing as matter ; and that, to which we now refer, is *motion*. Matter, therefore, is the cause of motion ; or, it is the *cause* why the DEITY exerts his power, in the production of that *effect*, which we call natural *motion*. On the same general principle, we may proceed to observe ; That motion is the cause of that kind of effect, which consists in a *change of matter* in respect to its *place*. For this kind of effect the language, in common use, does not, as we have said before, afford any appropriate name. More might be said on this subject ; but, what has been already observed, is sufficient to exhibit an idea of what is to be understood by *natural* causes, in distinction from those of the *moral* kind. For :

2. Every *moral* cause is to be considered as being an *antecedent*, and not a *consequent*. Though it always presupposes *power*, on which it *absolutely depends* for its *existence* ; yet it does not result from the EXERTION of any power ; for it universally consists in the AGREEMENT of the finite mind itself with the *original power* of the DEITY ; and therefore it is a *cause* only, and not an *effect*. Since the Supreme, Universal Agent is invested with a twofold original power, implying a possibility of *good*, on one side, and on the other, a possibility of *evil* ; hence there is a foundation for two perfectly distinct kinds of *moral causes*. According to one of these, the moral Governor of finite agents exerts his power in communicating *happiness* ; and according to the other, he does, by his own exertion, produce misery. Thus he rewards or punishes his obedient or rebellious subjects ; for he alone is that “one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.” He has absolutely forbidden every

finite free agent's forming any connexion with *that term* of his twofold power, which implies the original principle of *evil*; but he has particularly directed, and expressly commanded, every one, saying; "Let him TAKE HOLD OF MY STRENGTH that he may make PEACE with me." And in these two, that is the absolute prohibition against the forming of any connexion with the original principle of eternal death, and the positive command, expressly requiring the making of an agreement with the original principle of eternal life, is contained the whole sum of the moral law and the gospel. Hence the infinitely important business, which, in a *moral view*, essentially belongs to all finite free agents, is to intirely avoid the destroyer, and cordially embrace the Saviour.

From the preceding observations may be understood what is meant by natural and moral causes, and wherein consists the distinction between them. And it may now be observed in general: That every particular *cause*, whether natural or moral, is the *antecedent according to which the DEITY exerts his power in the production of a correspondent consequent*; and every *effect*, in the material, or mental, system, is the *consequent*, that necessarily results *from the actual exertion of divine power*. Hence it follows: That the DEITY is the UNIVERSAL AGENT, who, by the *actual exertion* of HIS OWN POWER, produces *all effects*. But since he never produces any effect without a cause; therefore he produces all *effects* according to their respective *causes*; therefore it is he, and HE ALONE, who connects all *consequences* with their respective *antecedents*. Hence originates the sacred maxim: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap

corruption : but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. vi. 7, 8.)

By the principles that have been stated, relative to the nature of causes and effects, we are led to the following conclusion : That all beings of every kind, both animate and inanimate, are absolutely dependent on the independent JEHOVAH, and intirely subject to his control. It was his original, universal plan to exert his power, in producing particular effects, according to their respective causes ; or, according to the real state of things, of which he has, at all times, a most perfect and infallible view. Therefore, according to the divine direction, let every finite free agent absolutely refrain from the *destroying*, and firmly "take hold" of the *saving* Power, of that Almighty Being, on whom all other beings intirely depend.

CHAPTER V.

CONTAINING A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FACTS, RELATIVE TO ONE PARTICULAR PART OF THE UNIVERSE, COMPOSING THAT SYSTEM OF REVOLVING BODIES, TO WHICH THE GLOBE, ON WHICH WE DWELL, BELONGS.

THAT particular system, of which the Sun, which makes our day, is the common centre, and round which the Earth, which we now inhabit, with a number of other planets, continually revolves, is called, "The Solar system." And the names of the primary planets, belonging to this system, that have been already discovered, and whose periodical times and proportional distances have been accurately ascertained, and the order of their ar-

rangement, beginning with those nearest the Sun, are as follows: Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Herschel. A very exact knowledge of the periodical times of these planets has been acquired by observation. Mercury performs a revolution round the Sun, in 87 days and 3 hours; Venus, in 224 days, and 17 hours; the Earth, in 365 days, and 6 hours; or, which is nearer the truth, 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 55 seconds; Mars, in 680 days, and 23 hours; Jupiter, in 11 years, 314 days, and 12 hours; Saturn, in 29 years, 167 days, and 7 hours; Herschel, in 33 years, 140 days, and 8 hours. The periodical times of these planets have been very accurately ascertained, by a long course of critical observations, with the assistance of optical instruments, constructed for that purpose. And astronomers have demonstrated the certainty of their calculations, in this respect, by their prediction of eclipses, years before their actual appearance. And if the absolute distance of any of the planets from the Sun could, in this way, be determined with such a degree of precision, as that of its periodical time; then the absolute distance of every one of them respectively, might be exactly known. This, however, is not the case. For though a series of careful observations may furnish the means of approximating nearer and nearer to the truth; yet mere external observation will be found insufficient to enable the observer to obtain a perfect knowledge of the absolute distance of revolving bodies from their common centre. From the two last transits of Venus over the Sun, in the years 1761, and 1769, it has been found, that the Earth is at a much greater distance from the Sun, and therefore, that the solar system is more extensive, than it was be-

fore supposed to be. The error, into which we are liable to fall, in estimating the actual distance of very remote objects, consists, not in exceeding, but in falling short, of the exact truth.

From the latest observations that have been made, the absolute distances of the primary planets from the Sun, computed in miles, are those which follow. The distance of Mercury is 36 million, 841 thousand, 468; of Venus, 68 million, 891 thousand, 486; of the Earth, 95 million, 173 thousand, 127; of Mars, 145 million, 14 thousand, 148; of Jupiter, 494 million, 990 thousand 976; of Saturn, 907 million, 956 thousand, 130; of Herschel, 1816 million, 455 thousand, 526.

Now, if there is any error, in the computation of these distances, it consists in defect, and not in excess. But whether there is any error or not, it does not at all effect the *certainty* of these *universal laws*, which govern the material system. For, the certain knowledge of the nature and extent of those laws, has not the least dependence on that external observation, according to which, the actual distance of any circulating planet from the central body, round which it revolves, is computed. Let the absolute distance be what it may, there is always a most exact *proportion* subsisting between the distance, the gravity, the velocity, and the periodical time. For it is a universal law, relating to revolving bodies, That the *cubes* of their distances are proportional to the *squares* of their periodical times. Hence it follows; That, having once determined the length of the periodical times of any number of revolving bodies, we can, by that, determine their proportional, or relative, distances, with the greatest degree of precision. And when we speak of the dis-

tance of a planet from the Sun, we have reference to what is called, the mean distance ; that is, a distance between the greatest and the least. For since the planets revolve in orbits, which are not perfectly circular, but elliptical ; therefore, their respective distances are not always the same, but are sometimes greater, and sometimes less ; therefore, the medium between the greatest and the least, is called the *mean distance*. Since the *periodical times* of the planets, that belong to the solar system, have been very accurately ascertained, by actual observation, therefore, their *proportional distances* have been deduced, according to that universal law, which regulates the circular motions of revolving bodies.

Hence, if we assume the distance of the Earth from the Sun, as the measure, or standard, and call it 1, that is, one whole distance, whatever it may be ; then, the distance between the Sun and every planet, belonging to the system, will bear a certain proportion to that between the Earth and the Sun. And since these proportional distances are such, as cannot be expressed in whole numbers alone, they will, therefore, be expressed in decimals, or in mixt numbers, just according as the nature of the case may require. Accordingly :

The distance of the Earth from the Sun, is just what it is, being neither greater nor less ; and therefore it is as 1 to 1. But the distance of Mercury is less than that of the Earth ; and is in the proportion of 0.3871 to 1. The distance of Venus from the Sun is greater than that of Mercury, but not so great as that of the Earth ; it being in the proportion of 0.72333 to 1. The distance of Mars from the Sun is greater than that of the Earth, in the proportion of 1.52369 to 1. The distance of Ju-

Jupiter is in the proportion of 5.20279 to 1. The distance of Saturn is to that of the Earth, in the proportion of 9.54072 to 1 ; That is, Saturn's distance is more than nine times and a half as great as that of the Earth. Herschel's distance from the Sun is in the proportion of 19.18362 to 1 ; that is, it is more than nineteen times as great as that of the Earth.

Those astonishing masses of matter, which compose the planets, that belong to the solar system, are continually revolving round the Sun, with an amazing degree of rapidity. For illustration, we shall here only just mention the magnitude of the Earth, and its hourly motion in its annual orbit. The whole surface of the globe, on which we dwell, contains one hundred and ninety-nine million, eight hundred and fifty-nine thousand, eight hundred and sixty square miles ; and its solid contents are two hundred and sixty-five thousand four hundred and four million, five hundred and ninety-eight thousand and eighty cubic miles. And we, who are placed on this huge mass of matter, are carried, by its annual motion round the Sun (which is a stupendous body of fire, more than one million, three hundred and ninety-two thousand, four hundred and ninety-nine times larger than the Earth) at the rate of sixty-eight thousand, two hundred and seventeen miles every hour.

There are a number of other revolving bodies, that belong to the solar system, beside those, that have been already mentioned ; for there are secondary as well as primary planets. One of these secondaries belongs to the Earth, and is called the Moon ; which is two hundred and forty thousand miles from the Earth, and revolves round it, from change to change, in twenty-nine days,

twelve hours, forty-four minutes, and three seconds; and, together with the Earth, revolves round the Sun, once a year. The time, however, in which the Moon completes one intire revolution, in its own proper orbit, is only twenty-seven days, seven hours, forty-three minutes, and five seconds. And therefore, every synodical revolution, or the time of the Moon's going round, from change to change, is longer than its periodical revolution, in its own proper orbit. For, since both the Earth and the Moon, go round the Sun, in a year, the Moon must not only go round its orbit, between change and change, but it must advance, as many more degrees, as the Earth has moved in its orbit, during that time, in order to be again in conjunction with the Sun. And since, in that interval of time, which intervenes between one change of the Moon, and the next succeeding change, the Earth advances, in its orbit round the Sun, twenty-nine degrees, six minutes and twenty-five seconds; therefore, it is evident, that between change and change, the Moon must advance twenty-nine degrees, six minutes and twenty-five seconds, more than once round its own orbit. Hence results the difference between the periodical and synodical revolutions of the Moon.

Jupiter is attended with four moons. The first of these, or that, which is nearest to the primary planet, revolves round it, in one day, eighteen hours, and thirty-six minutes; the second, in three days, thirteen hours, and fifteen minutes; the third, in seven days, three hours, and fifty-nine minutes; the fourth, in sixteen days, eighteen hours, and thirty minutes. And that the exact time, required for Jupiter's moons to revolve round their primary planet, is certainly known, by the telescopick observa-

tions, which have been made, is most clearly evident, from the following fact; viz, that the eclipses of those moons do actually happen (making no allowance for the progressive motion of light) precisely at the respective times, for which they have been previously calculated..... And from a view of those eclipses, at different times, when Jupiter is in different parts of its orbit round the Sun, a demonstration is exhibited, not only of the progressive motion of light, but also of the length of time, which it required for its being transmitted from the Sun to the Earth; which time is found to be eight minutes and fifteen seconds. For Jupiter, when it is in conjunction with the Sun, is more distant from the Earth, than it is, when it is in opposition, by the whole diameter of the Earth's annual orbit. But those eclipses, that have been mentioned, being calculated, without any reference to the progressive motion of light, will, according to what has been ascertained, by the most accurate observations, be seen eight minutes and fifteen seconds sooner than the calculated time, when the Earth is at the least distance from Jupiter; and when the earth is at its greatest distance, the time will be prolonged eight minutes and fifteen seconds beyond the calculation. The difference between these two extremes is sixteen minutes and thirty seconds. This, therefore, is the length of time, which light takes to move through a space, which is equal to the diameter of the Earth's annual orbit. And consequently; since the Earth is at the distance of the semi-diameter of its orbit from the Sun, it requires eight minutes and fifteen seconds for light to be transmitted from the Sun to the Earth.

Hence it follows : That light flies, with the amazing velocity of eleven million, six hundred and thirty-six thousand, three hundred and forty miles, in a minute.

It was formerly supposed, that there were only five moons belonging to Saturn. But the celebrated Doctor Herschel, by his new improvements in the art of constructing optical instruments, for the purpose of viewing distant objects, has discovered two others. So that it is known, that Saturn has seven moons. The first, or that which is nearest the primary, performs its revolution in twenty-two hours and thirty-seven minutes ; the second, in one day, eight hours and fifty-three minutes ; the third, in one day, twenty-one hours and nineteen minutes ; the fourth, in two days, seventeen hours and forty minutes ; the fifth, in four days, twelve hours and twenty-five minutes ; the sixth, in fifteen days, twenty-two hours and forty-one minutes ; and the seventh, in seventy-nine days, seven hours and forty-eight minutes. The two first, that are here mentioned, are those, that have been lately discovered.

Astronomers, by the assistance of optical instruments, have observed a very remarkable appearance, with regard to Saturn ; which has been found to be encircled with a thin broad RING, which, like the horizon of an artificial globe, is posited edgewise ; being twenty-one thousand miles in breadth, and at a distance from the body of the planet, on every side, equal to the breadth of the ring. This ring, on account of its position, with respect to the eye of the observer, is twice invisible in every periodical revolution of Saturn round the Sun ; or it is invisible once in about fifteen years.

The planet Herschel is attended with six moons. The first performs its revolution in five days, twenty-one hours and twenty-four minutes; the second, in eight days, sixteen hours and fifty-nine minutes; the third, in ten days, twenty-three hours and eleven minutes; the fourth, in thirteen days, eleven hours and five minutes; the fifth, in thirty-eight days, one hour and forty-nine minutes; and the sixth, in one hundred and seven days, sixteen hours and thirty-nine minutes.

There is a considerable number of revolving bodies, which belong to the solar system, in addition to those that have been already mentioned. Since the year 1800, there have been discovered three small celestial bodies, revolving round the sun, in elliptical orbits, situate between Mars and Jupiter. Their orbits are considerably more excentrick than that of any of the other planets; though their elements are still but imperfectly ascertained.

What now remains to be observed, respecting the solar system, relates to Comets; which are solid opaque bodies, revolving round the sun, in orbits, vastly more excentrick, than those of any of the planets. The whole list of comets, that have been hitherto observed, amounts to upwards of five hundred; of which about one hundred and seventy have been observed with accuracy, and the elements of their orbits computed. We shall only just mention that remarkable one, which made its appearance in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty. The time, required for this comet to complete one revolution, is five hundred and seventy-five years. And therefore it will not return until the year two thousand two hundred and fifty-five. It is, at its greatest distance,

about eleven thousand two hundred millions of miles from the sun. And when it is in that part of its orbit, which is nearest the sun, it moves with the amazing velocity of eight hundred and eighty thousand miles, in an hour. This astonishing degree of motion is required, in order that the centrifugal and centripetal forces, by which the revolving body is actuated, may balance each other; or that its projectile force may so far counteract the influence of gravity, as to prevent it from falling to the sun. And this law of motion is ordained by him, who has “weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance.”

In order to assist the imagination, in forming an idea of the extent of the solar system, and of its vast distance from the fixed stars; let us suppose, that a body, projected from the sun, should continue to fly with the swiftness of a ball discharged from a cannon, which is four hundred and eighty miles, every hour, then such a body would reach the orbit of Mercury, in 8 years, and 276 days; of Venus, in 16 years, and 136 days; of the earth, in 22 years, and 226 days; of Mars, in 34 years, and 165 days; of Jupiter, in 117 years, and 237 days; of Saturn, in 215 years, and 287 days; of Herschel, in 531 years, and 255 days; of the above mentioned Comet, at its greatest distance, in 2660 years. And that the supposed body might reach the nearest fixed stars, it would require no less than 7 million, 600 thousand years.

Having taken a brief view of some facts relative to the actual state of the solar system, and the several parts of which it is composed, we shall now proceed to a consideration of the general principles, which regulate the motions of all revolving bodies.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE UNIVERSAL LAWS OF CIRCULAR MOTION.

THERE are some changes, that take place, in consequence of certain peculiar principles; such as fire, electricity, magnetism, &c. which we shall not particularly consider; but, passing over these as not coming within the compass of our present design, we shall attend to the nature, and effects, of that grand universal principle, called gravity, gravitation, or attraction, which relates to *all* bodies, that are contained in the *whole* of the material system, and to every particle of matter, of which all those bodies are composed.

The influence of this universal principle, on *any body* is always *directly* as the *quantity* of *matter*, it contains, and *inversely* as the *square* of it *distance*. For illustration; let *c* and *r* be two bodies, so constituted, that *c* shall contain a much greater quantity of matter than *r*. Let us suppose, for instance, that the quantity of matter, contained in *c*, is to that contained in *r*, as five hundred thousand to one. Then *c* will be, what is called, a *central*, and *r*, a *revolving* body; because *c*, in this case, will be the *centre*, round which *r* will *revolve*. The centre of this revolutionary motion, or, the centre of gravity between *c* and *r*, will not, indeed, be exactly in the centre of *c*; but it will be just as much nearer to the centre of *c*, than it is to that of *r*, as the quantity of matter, contained in *c*, is greater than that, contained in *r*. The two bodies, *c* and *r*, have a mutual influence on each other. But the influence, that *c* has on *r*, is as much greater than

what r has on c , as the quantity of matter, contained in c , is greater, than what r contains ; which, by the supposition, is in proportion, as five hundred thousand to one. Therefore, the motion of r is five hundred thousand times as great as that of c . Consequently, though c is not absolutely in a state of rest, yet it may be said to be comparatively so, on account of the small degree of motion, which it has, compared to that of r . Since the motions of r and c are inversely, as their respective quantities of matter ; therefore the whole momentum or force of one is equal to that of the other. Consequently they exactly counterpoise each other, like equal weight, in the opposite scales of an even balance.

The revolving body, r , is actuated by the combined force of two motions. One of these motions alone would carry r , in the direction of a tangent, or a right line perpendicularly raised on the extremity of the radius of a circle ; in which case, it would continually recede from the central body, c ; the other motion alone would carry r , in the direction of the radius of a circle, or a right line drawn from the circumference to the centre ; and in this case, r would approximate towards c . The first of these two motions is called the centrifugal, or projectile force, and the other, the centripetal, or gravitating force, of r . But r is not actuated by either of these two single forces alone, but by the combination of both ; in consequence of which it is carried, in the direction of a curve line, which, being continued, returns into itself ; and thus forms, either a circle, or an ellipsis. The orbits of revolving bodies, however, are not perfectly circular, but are elliptical ; from the principle, That their gravities are inversely as the squares of their distances from their

central bodies. For let s be a body, the distance of which from c is twice or three times, &c. as great, as that of r ; then the gravity of s will be only one fourth, or one ninth, &c. as great as that of r . Therefore, if the distance of s from c is twice as great, as that of r : then the gravity of s will be 4 times less, than that of r ; for the square of 2 is 4. If the distance of s is 3 times as great as that of r ; then the gravity of s will be 9 times less, than that of r ; for the square of 3 is 9; and so of the rest.

Respecting revolutionary motion, six things are to be distinctly observed: viz. 1. Quantity of matter. 2. Proximity. 3. Distance. 4. Attraction, gravitation or gravity. 5. Velocity. 6. Periodical time. What special relation these several things have, to any central, or revolving body, will, as we pursue the subject, be particularly considered.

Let c be a central body, containing a quantity of matter consisting of a certain definite number of particles; let r be any one revolving body, at a certain *given* distance from c ; and let s be any other revolving body, at *any* distance either equal to, or greater or less than, that of r . Then c , by its attractive influence, will *cause* r to perform one revolution, in a given length of time. And c , by its *continual* action on r , will *cause* it to perform another revolution in an equal length of time. Therefore, the revolving body, r , will perform any number of revolutions, in equal lengths of time. The whole length of duration, which is required for the completion of one revolution, is what we call the periodical time. And r , since there is a stated distance between that and c , may be considered, as being the standard, with which to compare any other revolving body, s . There is always a certain

relation of mathematical exactness, subsisting between the distance and the periodical time of any distant body, revolving round any central body, which contains any definite quantity of matter. The distance, therefore, being given, the periodical time may, from that, with certainty, be inferred. And from the periodical time we may, with equal certainty, infer the distance. And by the distance or the periodical time, either of them, we can determine the gravity and the velocity of the revolving body.

For the sake of convenience, the term, *levity*, may be occasionally used, to express the diminution of gravity; and the term, *tardity*, to express the diminution of velocity. According to this mode of expression, which, for the sake of convenience, is here adopted, it is evident, that if, with respect to the two revolving bodies, r and s , the gravity of s is only one half, or one third, &c. as great as that of r ; then the levity of s is twice or three times, &c. as great as that of r . And a similar observation may be made with respect to the tardity of s , when compared with that of r .

Now, in order to exhibit a general view of the universal principles of circular motion, we shall, in the first place, assume three bodies; viz. one central body, c , containing a certain definite quantity of matter; one revolving body, r , at a stated distance from c ; and another revolving body, s , at any comparative distance. Then c will attract r , or, which is the same, r will gravitate towards c , with a certain degree of force, exactly according to the number of particles contained in c . For every single particle will be taken into the account; because he, who at first created, and continually governs the

whole, infallibly knows, and particularly regards, every particle; not one, therefore, can escape his notice, nor be below his care.

Though r has a continual tendency to unite with c (and this tendency is called the *gravity* of r) yet it has, at the same time, a tendency (called its *projectile force*) in the direction of a tangent, to continually recede from its central body, c . By the combination of these two counter-active tendencies, r is confined within certain limits; and being always kept at its proper distance, it is constrained to revolve round its central body; and, having performed one revolution, in a certain length of time, it will then, in an equal length of time, perform another, and so on continually.

This may be illustrated by a diagram. Let the line, rc , be the radius of a circle, and the line, rz , the tangent. Then the revolving body, r , is actuated by two forces; viz. projection and gravitation. The first of these, acting alone, would carry the body, r , in the direction, rz ; and the other force, c acting alone, would carry it in the direction, rx , towards c . But by the *combined influence* of the *two forces* (projection and gravitation) the body, r , will be carried in the direction, ry , and consequently, will revolve round the central body, c .

Having considered the state of the case, as it relates to *one* of the revolving bodies, viz. r , and observed, that it is attracted in exact proportion to the quantity of matter in the central body, c , we shall now proceed to observe; That the revolving body, s , is also continually at-

tracted by c . Therefore, if the distance of s from c , is just the same, as that of r ; then c will attract s , with the same degree of force, as that with which r is attracted; or s will be attracted in proportion to the *quantity of matter*, contained in c . But if the distance of s from c is different from that of r ; then, in order to form a true estimate of the attractive influence of c , with relation to s , the *comparative distance* of s from c , as well as the *quantity of matter*, which c contains, must be reckoned into the account. For if the distance of s from c is greater than that of r ; then the attractive force of c on s , or, which is the same, the gravitation of s towards c , will be less than that of r , in proportion to the comparative distance of s from c ; and that, not merely in the simple, but in the duplicate ratio, or the square of the distance. Therefore, if the comparative distance of s is 2; then the gravitation of s will be four times less, or its levity will be four times greater than that of r . Again; if the comparative distance of s is 3; then its comparative levity will be 9. For the square of 2 is 4, and the square of 3 is 9. And on the same principle; if the comparative distance of s is 4, 5, or 6, &c. then its comparative levity will be 16, 25, or 36, &c. For the square of 4 is 16; that of 5 is 25; and that of 6 is 36, &c.

Now there are four respects in which s may be compared with r . For we may take a comparative view of it, in respect to its distance, its gravity, its velocity, and its periodical time. If the distance of the revolving body, s , is greater than that of the revolving body, r , from the central body, c ; then the gravity and the velocity of s will be diminished, and consequently the periodical time will be increased.

If the distance of the revolving body, s , is four times as great, as that of r ; then the period of the revolution of s , round the central body, c , will be eight times as long as that of r . For, in this case, the gravity of s will be only one sixteenth part as great as the gravity of r ; and therefore, the velocity of s , in its motion round the central body, c , will be only one half as great, as the velocity of r . For it is universally the case, that the gravity of any distant revolving body, is directly as the quantity of matter in the central body, and inversely as the square of the intervening distance between the revolving and the central body; and the velocity is always directly as the square root of the quantity of matter in the central body, and inversely as the square root of the distance. Thus; Suppose the distance of s from c to be four times as great, as that of r ; then, since gravity is inversely as the square of the distance of the gravitating body, the gravity of s , in this case, will be inversely as the square of 4..... But the square of 4 is 16. Consequently, the gravity of s , when compared with that of r , will be inversely as 16; that is, it will be $\frac{1}{16}$. And therefore, the velocity of s , compared with that of r , will be inversely as the square root of 4. But the square root of 4 is 2. Therefore, the comparative velocity of s will be inversely as 2; that is, it will be $\frac{1}{2}$; or, which is the same, the comparative levity of s will be directly as the square of 4, which is 16; and the comparative tardity will be directly as the square root of 4, which is 2. Now since the comparative distance of s is 4, and consequently its comparative tardity is 2; therefore, the periodical time of s , when compared with that of r , will be 8. For the periodical time of a revolving body depends on two things; viz.

the extent of its orbit, and the velocity of its motion.... Since the distance of s , and consequently, the extent of its orbit, is four times as great, as that of r ; therefore, s , if it had the same velocity as r , would require a period of duration four times as long, as that which is required by r , in order to complete one revolution. But since s revolves in an orbit *four* times as extensive, as that of r , and with a velocity only *one half* as great, or with a tardity, or slowness of motion, twice as great; therefore, both of these considerations being taken into the account, it will follow; That s requires a period of duration twice four times, that is, eight times, as long, as that, which is required by r , in order to complete a revolution round its central body, c . Consequently; if the periodical time of r is one day, one month, or one year, &c. then the periodical time of s will be eight days, eight months, or eight years, &c. Hence we may see, what a wonderful, harmonious, exact, and mathematical proportion there is, subsisting between the distance, the levity (or diminution of gravity) the tardity (or diminution of velocity) and the periodical time. For the comparative distance of s being 4; the levity will be 16, the tardity 2, and the periodical time 8. Hence we have the following series of numbers in geometrical progression; viz. 2 : 4 : 8 : 16. The first term of this series is expressive of the tardity; the second, of the distance; the third, of the periodical time; and the fourth, of the levity.

Let us now take a more enlarged view by introducing a number of other revolving bodies, in addition to those, which have already been the subject of consideration; still retaining the same central body, as before. Let the additional revolving bodies be t , u , v , &c. Then all

these taken together, will constitute one particular system. It must be observed, however, that it is not our present design to ascertain the precise number of bodies, that actually belong to any particular system, nor to determine their exact central distances. But the design is to illustrate the general principles of all circular motion, and the universal laws, according to which revolving bodies are invariably governed, in what is usually called the common course of nature. And the common course of nature, when considered with respect to the various changes, that are continually taking place, in the material universe, is a constant series of divine operations, relative to the natural world, in distinction from the moral.

With regard to the revolving bodies, r, s, t, u, v , we shall make the following statement : r is at a certain given distance from the central body, c ; which distance is to be considered as the standard, with which the respective distances of the other revolving bodies, s, t, u, v , are to be compared. The distance of r , considered in itself, or being compared with itself, is 1. The distance of s , when compared with that of r , we will suppose to be as 4 to 1 ; the distance of t , as 9 to 1 ; that of u , as 16 to 1 ; and that of v , as 25 to 1. Then according to this statement, we have one central body, c , containing a certain definite quantity of matter ; and we have a number of revolving bodies, r, s, t, u, v ; the respective distances of which from their central body, c , are as 1, 4, 9, 16, 25. Any other distances, instead of these, might have been assumed, without making any alteration in the general nature of the case ; but this particular statement has been made, in preference to any other, only for the sake of the convenience of expressing the *square roots* of the

several distances in whole numbers. Thus the square root of 1 is 1; that of 4 is 2; that of 9 is 3; that of 16 is 4, &c. Now, the comparative distance of s being 4, its levity will be as the square of 4, which is 16; the tardity will be as the square root of 4, which is 2; and the periodical time will be as the distance multiplied by the tardity, which is 8. Hence the tardity, distance, periodical time, and levity of s will be expressed by the following series of numbers in geometrical progression: $2 : 4 : 8 : 16$. And, on the same universal principle, the tardity, distance, periodical time, and levity of t will be expressed by the series, $3 : 9 : 27 : 81$. The tardity, distance, &c. of u will be expressed by the series, $4 : 16 : 64 : 256$. The tardity, &c. of v will be expressed by the series, $5 : 25 : 125 : 625$. For it is universally the case, with respect to any number of bodies, revolving round one central body, that the tardity, distance, periodical time, and levity, of every one of them, except that, which is made the standard of comparison, will be expressed by a perfectly regular series of numbers, in geometrical progression. Hence, if we assume any number of bodies, as r, s, t, u, v , whose distances from one central body, c , are respectively as 1, 4, 9, 16, 25; then, fixing on the tardity, distance, periodical time, and levity of *one* of them, viz. r , as the standard of comparison, that of the others, viz. s, t, u, v , will be expressed by the following geometrical series. (1) $2 : 4 : 8 : 16$. (2) $3 : 9 : 27 : 81$. (3) $4 : 16 : 64 : 256$. (4) $5 : 25 : 125 : 625$. Here the first term of every series expresses the tardity; the second, the distance; the third, the periodical time; and the fourth, the levity. And so it is universally; let the number of bodies revolving round one common centre,

be what it may. The tardity will be as the square root of the distance; the distance, therefore, will be as the square of the tardity; the periodical time will be as the product of the tardity, multiplied into the distance; and the levity will be as the square of the distance. And with regard to that one, which is made the standard of comparison, or that one, which is compared with itself, its tardity, distance, periodical time, and levity, each one of them, is exactly what it is, being neither greater nor less; and therefore it must be expressed by 1. And since, in the preceding statement, the tardity, distance, &c. of r are made the standard of comparison, therefore, the tardity of r is 1; its distance is 1, &c. But since the tardity of s is twice as great as that of r ; therefore it is expressed by 2. And since the distance of s is four times as great as that of r ; therefore the distance of s is expressed by 4; and so of the rest.

From the preceding statement, with the exemplifications, that have been given, it follows; That, with regard to any number of bodies, revolving round one common centre, the *squares* of their *periodical times* are always directly as the *cubes* of their distances. Therefore, if the periodical time is 8, for instance, then the distance will be 4. But the square of 8 is the same as the cube of 4; that is, $8 \times 8 = 4 \times 4 \times 4 = 64$. Again; if the periodical time is 27; then the distance will be 9. But the square of 27 is the same as the cube of 9; that is, $27 \times 27 = 9 \times 9 \times 9 = 729$. Once more; if the periodical time is 64; then the distance will be 16. But the square of 64 is the same as the cube of 16; that is, $64 \times 64 = 16 \times 16 \times 16 = 4096$. And thus it is universally. Hence it follows; That if the periodical time is known, then, from that, the distance may

with certainty be inferred ; and not only the distance, but also the gravitation and the velocity. In order to illustrate this grand universal principle, we shall fix on the periodical time of our earth round the sun, as the standard, calling the time 1, that is, one year. And then we shall suppose a number of other bodies, s , t , u , v , to revolve round the sun, in different lengths of time ; we shall suppose, for instance, the periodical time of s to be eight years ; that of t , twenty-seven ; that of u , sixty-four ; and that of v , one hundred and twenty-five. Then from this statement we can exhibit the evidence, and illustrate the nature, of the universal principle, which we now have in view, with as much certainty, as if we had stated the exact periodical times of those planets (viz. Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, &c.) which actually revolve about the Sun. And not only so, but, by the present statement, we shall avoid all those intricate calculations and fractional numbers, which, if they were actually introduced, would be attended with some embarrassment, without being, in any degree, subservient to a more clear explanation of those general laws, which regulate the circular motions of any system of bodies, revolving round their common centre. By the universal principle, That the square of the periodical time is directly as the cube of the distance, we can, from having the *periodical time* given, exactly determine the *proportional distance*, according to the following rule :

Square the periodical time ; then extract the cube root of the product, and this will give the distance.

Thus according to the statement, the periodical time of s is 8 ; the square of which is 64 ; and the cube root of 64 is 4. Therefore the proportional distance of s is 4.

For since the planet, s , requires a length of duration eight times as great, as what the Earth requires, to perform one revolution round the Sun; therefore we infer, that the distance of s from the Sun is just four times as great as that of the Earth. And this being the case, s is attracted by the Sun with a force, which is only one sixteenth part as great, as that with which the Earth is attracted; and therefore the velocity, with which s moves in its orbit, is only just half as great as the velocity of the Earth. The periodical time of the planet, t , compared with that of the Earth, is 27; or the period of duration required by t , in order to complete a revolution round the Sun, is twenty-seven times as long as that, which the Earth requires. The square of 27, is 729; and the cube root of 729 is 9. The proportional distance of t from the Sun, therefore, is 9. Consequently, the gravitation of t , or the force, with which it is attracted towards the Sun, is eighty-one times less than the gravitation of the Earth; and therefore the velocity, with which t is carried round in its orbit, is only a third part as great as the velocity of the Earth. The planet, u , according to the statement, requires a period of duration sixty-four times as long, as that, which the Earth requires, in order to make one revolution round the Sun. Now the square of 64 is 4096; the cube root of which is 16; therefore the proportional distance of u from the Sun is 16. Consequently, since the gravity of revolving bodies always decreases in proportion, as the squares of their respective distances increase, the gravity of the planet, u , is 16 times 16, or 256 times, less than that of the Earth; and therefore, the velocity of u , in its circular motion, is only one fourth part as great as that of the Earth; or,

which is the same, u moves four times as slow as the Earth. Once more; the periodical time of the planet, v , is one hundred and twenty-five times as long as that of the Earth. The square of 125 is 15625, the cube root of which is 25; and, therefore, 25 is the proportional distance of v from the Sun. The square of this distance, which is 625, shows, that the attractive influence of the Sun is only the six hundred and twenty-fifth part as great on v , as it is on the Earth. And since the square root of the distance of v is 5; therefore the velocity, of v , in its orbit, is five times less than the velocity of the Earth.

Now the same universal principles, that we have been illustrating, by making certain particular statements, will apply, with regard to the *real planets*, that actually revolve round the Sun. It is to be considered, however, that the taking of *them* for examples, in order to explain the general laws of attraction or gravitation, is attended with this inconvenience; that, though all their motions are, in reality, perfectly regular, and mathematically exact, yet the result of calculations, respecting them, cannot be accurately expressed by numbers, or, at least, not by *whole* numbers (a specimen of which has already been given, in the preceding chapter) and therefore, we have adopted a method, which is not subject to such an inconvenience. For our present design is, not so much to investigate particular *facts*, as it is to exhibit a general view of the universal *laws*, according to which the Deity governs the various parts of the material universe. His government of the moral world will be considered in its proper place.

From the preceding observations it is evident: That, with regard to any number of distant bodies, revolving

round a common centre, there is always an exact and invariable proportion subsisting between their distances, gravities, velocities, and periodical times.

What has been hitherto observed, respecting the general laws of circular motion, is founded on the supposition, That there is only *one central body*; in which case, it is universally true: That, whatever may be the *distance* of the revolving body, its *gravity* will be *inversely* as the *square*; its *velocity*, *inversely* as the *square root*; and the *square* of its *periodical time*, *directly* as the *cube* of its *DISTANCE*.

We shall now proceed to the consideration of a different case; viz. that, in which there is more than one central body, and consequently, more than one system of revolving bodies. Take the following statement. Let *c* be any *one* central body, as before; and let *b* be any *other* central body, which bears any proportion to *c*, in respect to its quantity of matter. Let the quantity of matter, which *b* contains, be to that, which is contained in *c*, as 4 to 1, 9 to 1, or 16 to 1, &c. or as $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1, $\frac{1}{9}$ to 1, or $\frac{1}{16}$ to 1, &c. Let *r* and *x* be any two revolving bodies; the first circulating round *c*, and the other round *b*, at equal distances from their respective central bodies, *c* and *b*. Then, with regard to *x*, according to the present statement, it is universally the case; That its gravity will be directly as the quantity of matter; its velocity, directly as the square root; and its periodical time, inversely as the square root of the quantity of matter, contained in its central body, *b*.

We have now taken a view of two general cases, relative to the universal laws of circular motion. In the first case, there is only *one* statement, with regard to the

quantity of matter, contained in the central body, and *various* statements, with respect to the *distance* of the revolving, from the central body. In the second case, there is only *one* statement, with regard to the *distance* of the revolving, from the central body, and *various* statements, with respect to the *quantity of matter*, contained in the central body. We shall now proceed to consider what, according to the universal laws of circular motion, in the material system, will be the gravity, the velocity, and the periodical time, of *every revolving body*; at whatever *distance* it may be from its *central body*, and whatever *quantity of matter*, the *central body* may contain..... Let it then be observed, that with respect to *any revolving body*, its gravity will always be *directly* as the quantity of matter in its central body, and *inversely* as the square of its distance. The velocity will always be a mean proportional between the gravity and the distance. And the periodical time will always be directly as the distance, and inversely as the velocity.

In all the statements, that have been made, and the illustrations, that have been given, relative to the laws of circular motion, we have continually had the Deity in view, as the Supreme, Universal, and Almighty Agent. Therefore, what has been observed, must not be considered as a subject of mere speculation, or vain amusement. Every mind, which is not hardened, to the last degree, must be inspired with the deepest awe, and profoundest reverential fear, from the solemn consideration, that an All wise and All-powerful Being, with unremitting energy, is operating, on every side, with such incessant care, as not to let a single particle of matter escape his notice, through the whole of that boundless sys-

tem, or rather that infinite number of systems, of which the material universe is composed. From his exercising such an exact and universal government; over inanimate matter, we may, with certainty, infer, and it is a most interesting and important inference, that none of the affairs of the moral world, not even the minutest of them, will be neglected by him. Let it be remembered; that it is the same Being, who weighs in the balance, every particle of matter, that will call his rational creatures to a most strict account, for every action, and every thought.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE PRIMITIVE CAUSE OF NATURAL MOTION.

WE have now taken a general view of the material universe, and have given a statement of the universal laws of circular motion, and illustrated those fundamental principles, which will be readily admitted by all, who have acquired a competent knowledge of the elements of natural philosophy and astronomy. But after all the observations, that have been made, what has always been accounted to be the most difficult part of the subject, respecting motion, and has been considered as being inexplicable, still remains to be investigated. We must, therefore, now pursue an unbeaten tract, and traverse regions hitherto unexplored. That motion actually exists, we are irresistibly convinced, by ocular demonstration, in a view of the effects, which it is continually producing; and that there is such a thing as GRAVITY, constantly operating, according to a system of laws, mathematically

exact, a long course of the most accurate observations has furnished indubitable evidence. For the astronomer, assuming those laws, as data, will foretel, with the greatest precision, particular events, relative to the planetary system, years before the actual existence of the events themselves. This is a fact, with which the illiterate, as well as the learned, are well acquainted. But, What is *motion*, and whence does it *originate*? What is the *cause* of *gravity*, and why does it operate, in such a peculiar *manner*? These are inquiries, which have often been made, but have never been answered. The answer, therefore, remains to be given.

We shall *now* consider motion only as it relates to *matter*, without taking any other view of it, till we come to treat on the mental system. Motion is something, which is perfectly distinct from matter; and therefore, is not to be considered as consisting in any change or modification of matter whatever. For every change, or new modification of matter, is the *effect* of motion, and not *motion itself*.

In discussing this subject, therefore, *three things* must be distinctly brought into view:

First; matter, *continuing* to exist in any *one place*.

Secondly; something, the nature of which, when added to matter, is to *limit* the *time* of its *continuing* to exist in *one place*.

Thirdly; the *consequence*, or *effect*, of this *limitation*; which effect consists in matter, *beginning* to exist in a *different* place.

The first of these *three things* is called *rest*. The second is what we call *motion*. And the third (because the language, in common use, furnishes no one single term,

whereby to express it) we call a *change of place*; by which we always mean, a *change of matter*, in respect to its place; for PLACE ITSELF is absolutely incapable of ever being *changed*. (See chap. ii.) Hence we may see what is the *general nature of motion*. In that appropriate sense in which we use the term, it is that peculiar kind of existence, which is capable of being *added to matter*, and which, when added, *limits the time* of its continuance in any one place. Hence, if any degree of motion is added to any quantity of matter, then the quantity of matter, to which the motion is added, will not always remain in a state of rest; for the *time* of its thus continuing will be *limited*, according to the degree of motion, which is added to it. The greater the degree of motion, the more *limited*, that is, the *shorter*, will be the *time of rest*, with relation to any quantity of matter, to which the motion is added; and vice versa.

Hence it is evident, that the *duration of rest* is always *inversely* as the *degree of motion*. For illustration: Let *b* and *c* be two bodies of matter, to each of which, some degree of motion is added. If the degree of motion, which is added to *b*, is twice as great, as that which is added to *c*; then *b* will have only half as long a time to rest as *c*; or, which is the same, *c* will have twice as long a time as *b*. Therefore, the number of changes, that will be produced in *b*, in any given length of time; as a minute, or an hour, &c. will be twice as great, as what will be produced in *c*, in the same length of time.

Again: If the motion, which is added to *b*, is a thousand times as great, as that which is added to *c*; then the time, that *b* will be permitted to continue, in any one place, or to remain in a state of rest, will be only a thou-

sandth part as long, as the time, that c will have for that purpose. In consequence of this, therefore, the number of successive changes, through which b will pass, in respect to the place of its existence, will be a thousand times as great, as that, which will, in the same time, be produced in c .

From what has been said, it is evident, that motion and rest, that is, *limited* rest, are perfectly consistent with each other; and therefore, they may both exist at the same time. But *rest* and *change* of *place* necessarily require *succession*, and can never be in a state of coexistence. It is the nature of motion, not to *destroy* rest, but to *limit* the *time* of its *duration*. Though it is the nature of motion, when it is added to matter, to cause it to change its place, that is, cause it to *begin* to exist in a number of different places; yet matter, notwithstanding this, is allowed to have, between its several successive changes, certain intervals of rest, of longer or shorter duration, in the exact inverse proportion of the degree of motion, by which those changes are produced. That is, the greater the degree of motion, the shorter will be the intervals of rest; and consequently, the greater will be the number of successive changes, that the motion will produce in the quantity of matter, to which it belongs.... And the less the degree of motion, the longer will be the intervals of rest; and consequently, the less will be the number of successive changes.

Let b be any one quantity of matter, actually existing in any one place, x . If b is intirely destitute of motion; then there will be nothing to *limit* the *time* of b 's *continuing* to exist in the same place. Therefore, b , in this case, will always continue to exist in the place, x ; and conse-

quently, will never *begin* to exist in any *other* place, *y*..... But let any degree of motion be added; then the *time* of *b*'s continuing to exist in the place, *x*, will be *limited*, exactly according to the degree of motion, which is added to *b*. Consequently *b*, after having existed in the place, *x*, or after having been in a state of rest, for a *limited time*, will cease to exist in the place, *x*, and begin to exist in another place, *y*. And *b*, having *continued* to exist, for a *certain length of time*, in the place, *y*, will cease to exist in *y*, and *begin* to exist in *another place*, *z*, &c..... Hence it is evident, that if *b* is any one quantity of matter, and *x*, *y*, *z*, &c. are any number of places; and if any degree of motion is added to *b*; then the motion, which is added to *b*, will *limit* the *time* of *b*'s *continuing* to exist in *x*, and therefore will cause it to *begin* to exist in *y*; then it will *limit* the *time* of *b*'s *continuing* to exist in *y*, and therefore will cause it to *begin* to exist in *z*, &c. The motion, which is added to any quantity of matter, will not prevent its continuing to exist for *some* length of time, in any one place; but it will *limit* the *time* of its *continuance*; and consequently, the motion will cause the quantity of matter to change its place, at the expiration of certain intervals of time. The velocity of motion is estimated, according to the number of changes, which the motion will produce, in any given length of time. And the whole momentum, or force, of any moving body, is always proportional to the quantity of matter, multiplied by the velocity of its motion.

Velocity may be considered, as bearing the same relation to motion, as density does to matter. The greater the number of particles which any body of matter contains in the same extent of space, the greater is its den-

sity ; so the greater the number of changes, which any degree of motion will produce, in the same length of time, the greater is its velocity. Thus ; let b and c be two quantities of matter of equal magnitude, and to each of which belongs some degree of motion. If the number of particles, contained in b , is three, four, or five times, &c. as great, as the number of particles, contained in c ; then the density of b will be three, four, or five times, &c. as great as that of c . And if the motion, that belongs to c , will produce, in any given length of time, a number of changes, which is three, four, or five times, &c. as great, as what the motion, that belongs to b , will produce, in the same length of time ; then the velocity of c 's motion will be three, four, or five times, &c. as great as the velocity of the motion of b . Hence it is evident, that MOTION, in the whole, and in every part of it, is perfectly distinct from *matter*, and does not consist in any change or modification of matter whatever. Motion does not consist in change of place ; but it is the cause of such change.

Having considered the general nature of motion, we shall now proceed to make some observations on the different kinds of it.

First, we shall consider motion as being simple or compound.

A simple motion is one single motion alone, which, being added to any body of matter, will cause it to pass through a continued series of uniform changes, in respect to its place ; that is, it is a motion which will cause the body of matter, to which it belongs, to begin to exist, by a continued regular succession, in a number of different places, all situated in the direction of a right line.

And this regular, uniform, series of changes will always be continued, as long as the motion, which was first impressed, continues to exist in its simple original state. Therefore one simple motion alone is sufficient to produce a series of changes of unlimited length.

Compound motion consists in a continual addition of new supplies to the simple motion, which has been already described. Simple motion alone will, without receiving any new supply, continually carry the body of matter, to which it belongs, directly forward in a rectilinear course. But *that* kind of influence, which is called GRAVITY OR ATTRACTION, being added to the simple motion of any body of matter, will cause it to continually deviate from a right lined direction, and compel it to revolve, in that kind of curve, which constitutes the circumference of a circle, or an ellipsis. And this compound motion is of such a nature, that it will not of itself continue, for any length of time ; and therefore, in order to its being preserved, there must be a constant series of new supplies, derived from some never failing fountain. Simple motion, when it is once produced, will always continue, till there is something to destroy it ; but that compound motion, in which GRAVITY OR ATTRACTION is implied, will, unless it is continually renewed, immediately expire. Simple motion, or what may be called the projectile force of any body of matter, may be produced by the single operation of some one cause. And this motion or force, being once produced, will always continue, till something destroys it ; even though the particular cause, which first produced it, should cease to exist. For when simple motion is once communicated, by some particular cause, to any body of matter, it will then, as

much require some other cause to reduce that body to a state of unlimited rest, as it required a cause, at first, to give it motion: But with respect to that kind of influence, which is called GRAVITY, the case is intirely different; for that will not continue to exist without being constantly renewed by the cause, that first produced it. Thus the Earth continually gravitates towards the Sun; and this gravitation of the Earth, being combined with its projectile force, compels it to move in such a direction, as to return to the place, which it has left, at any given time. But if the cause of its gravitation should cease; then, though it would still continue in a state of motion; yet it would no longer move in the same direction as before, but would, by the motion which it had already acquired, be for ever carried forward, in a rectilinear direction; unless it should meet with some extrinsic cause to obstruct its course.

We have considered motion as being simple or compound. Simple motion, as we have said, is that, by which the quantity of matter, to which it belongs, is carried uniformly forward from place to place, in the direction of a right line. Compound motion, at least that, which will here be made the subject of consideration, is that, which causes any quantity of matter to continually deviate from a right-lined direction, in such a manner, as to make it return to the same place from which it has, at any time, departed. This kind of motion always implies *gravity* or *attraction*. (See the diagram p. 365.)

With regard to motion, there is another distinction, according to which it is to be considered as being *primitive* or *derivative*. And though it is primitive motion, which we have, at present, chiefly in view; yet, for the

sake of illustrating the distinction, we shall just mention a few instances of the other kind. And any *one* part of matter has derivative, or mechanical motion, when it has the same as that, which previously belonged to some *other* part. And in this case, whatever is gained by one part, is lost by the other. Motion, after it has begun to exist, is capable of being actually *transferred* from one body to another. And *that*, which is thus transferred, is derivative or mechanical. Therefore, there must be motion in *actual existence*, before there can be any of the derivative or mechanical kind. Consequently, the *first existence* of motion never can be accounted for, on any mechanical principles whatever. With respect to every machine of human invention, it is universally the case, that the motion, by which it is actuated, had a real existence, in the present time, before the machine begun to operate. Thus it is also with regard to ships, that sail on the water, and clouds, that float in the air, &c. We are, therefore, now led in the course of the subject, to consider the grand question: What is the cause of the *first existence* of motion? Or, in other words; What is the cause of *original* or *primitive* motion, in distinction from that which is *derivative* or *mechanical*?

We have already observed; That motion is the cause of that kind of effect, which consists in a change of place; for when it is added to matter, it is the cause of its being transferred from one place to another. For being thus added, it limits the time of its *continuing* to exist, in any one place, and therefore, will not permit it to *remain* in a state of unlimited rest. *Motion*, therefore, is the *cause* of the *change* of *matter*, in respect to its *place*. We shall now proceed to show; That MATTER is the CAUSE

of original or primitive MOTION. The Sun, for instance, is the cause of that *motion* of the planets, in *consequence* of *which* they revolve in circular, (or more strictly speaking) in elliptical orbits. And this motion is intirely im-mechanical; not being derived from the motion of the Sun, nor from any actual motion, any where existing in the universe.

In order to investigate the origin of motion, it must be considered, that such is the nature of that kind of mutable existence, which belongs to the material system, that the *whole* of it never can all actually exist, at any one time. Consequently, only one *part* of it is present; and therefore the remaining part is future. And this being the case, we must, in order to form a true estimate of the state of things, take the *future*, as well as the *present*, into the account. Otherwise, all calculations, that ever can be made respecting the subject, will be intirely erroneous and essentially defective; especially, so far as what relates to original or primitive motion, and particularly that, in which *gravity* or *attraction* is implied. All mechanical motion is something, which is transferred from one body of matter to another: or, it is something, which is transferred from *one* part of *present* existence to *another* part of existence, which is *present*; so that we can find the origin of *mechanical* motion without looking beyond the present; for it is derived wholly from what is actually *present*, and not from what is *future*. But the case, with respect to *original* or *primitive* motion, is essentially different. For *that* is something which is not transferred nor derived from any thing, that actually exists, in any part of immensity; but it is something, which is transferred from the FUTURE to the present. To find

the origin of it, therefore, we must not confine our views to *present* existence, but must look into ETERNITY ; for that is the fountain from which it flows.

That Almighty Agent, who governs all worlds, with uncontrollable sway, has established a relation between the present and the future ; and has so constituted this relation, with respect to the state of things, in the mutable system, as to make the present and the future *inversely*, one as the other. And therefore, if that part of mutable existence, which is present, is, at any time *increased* ; then the other part, viz. that which is future will, as a consequence, be proportionably *diminished*. For mutable existence, consisting of matter and motion, is of such a nature, that the whole of it cannot all exist in the present time. *One* part of it, therefore, as we have said, is present, and the *other* is future. Now with regard to any whole, consisting of two parts, it is evident, that the greater one part is, the less will be the other. It is also evident, that if there is a whole, consisting of two parts ; then those two parts must have a relation, one to the other, and that they must be *inversely*, one as the other.

In the system of matter and motion there is, as we have observed, a *relation of the present to the future*. This relation, one term of which is present, and the other future, is of such a nature, that the second, or *future* term, is always *inversely* as the first, or *present* term. Hence it follows ; That if the present term should be changed directly ; then the future term will be proportionably changed *inversely*. Therefore, if the present term should be, in any degree, increased ; then, as the universal consequence, the future term will, in the same degree, be diminished. Here, then, we have the grand,

universal principle, on which all original or primitive motion, implying GRAVITY or ATTRACTION, intirely depends, and according to which it is produced.

What relates to voluntary motion, which is something of a very different nature from that, which is now the subject of consideration, will, in the subsequent part of this work, be brought into view. It will be remembered, therefore, by the reader, that we are here treating on matter and motion, and the mode of divine operation, without the interposition of any finite mind.

In order for the proof and illustration of the principle, That matter is the cause of motion; or in other words expressive of the same idea, That *matter* is the *antecedent*, according to which the DEITY produces *motion*, as the correspondent *consequent*. we shall make a number of statements, gradually proceeding from one to another; beginning with the most simple, and advancing by degrees, to those that are more complex. But since the method of treating the subject, and the ideas to be communicated, are intirely new, and language is very defective, we shall be under a necessity of using more repetition and circumlocution, than would otherwise be desirable; we shall, however, study perspicuity, even though it may be at the expense of elegance of style. We shall now proceed to make a number of statements.

1. Let p be one single particle of matter; and let x be the motion, that p is susceptible of, or which it is capable of receiving. Now let us suppose p to be intirely alone, without any other quantity of matter in actual existence; then p , in this case, would be in a state of unlimited rest. For no mutable existence would be present, but only p ; and consequently, the whole motion,

that p is capable of receiving, would be absent; for the whole of x would be future. There would, therefore, be a relation of the present to the future; that is, the present particle, p , would have a relation to the future motion, x . But as long as the first term of the relation, consisting in the particle of matter, p , continued to be present, without having any thing added to it; so long would the second term of the relation, consisting in x , continue to be absent, that is, future, without having any thing subducted from it. As long as p should thus remain alone, without having any other quantity of matter coexisting with it, no degree of motion would be transferred from the future to the present. For, in this case, there would be no reason, or *cause*, why any motion should be thus transferred.

You will say, perhaps, That the Deity, being Omnipotent, would have power to produce motion, or transfer it from the future to the present. This we shall readily grant to be certainly true; but then, it must be considered, that there is a distinction between the POWER with which the Deity is invested, and his ACTUAL EXERTION of it. He was invested with all power from eternity; but he makes actual exertions of it, from time to time, just according as he sees fit. For though he is Omnipotent, yet he never exerts his power, without some proper *reason* for such exertion; or, in other words, he never produces any effect without a cause. Therefore, if the particle of matter, p , continued to be present alone, without being altered, by having any quantity of matter added to it; then there would be no *reason*, or *cause*, why the future motion, x , should be altered, by having any degree subducted from it. And, this being the case, no

motion would be transferred from the future to the present. Consequently, p would remain in a state of unlimited rest ; waiting (if we may use the expression) for the actual coexistence of some other quantity of matter, as a *reason*, or *cause*, whereby it would be rendered fit and proper, that some degree of motion should be transferred from the future to the present, or from x to p .

We have now given a statement of what *would* have been the case, if there had never been, but only one particle alone, without the coexistence of any other. This one particle, being alone, would have remained intirely destitute of motion. For there would have been no reason, or cause, why any motion should be transferred from the future to the present. We shall now proceed to make another statement.

2. Let p be one particle of matter, and x , the motion, of which p is susceptible. Let q be another particle, in a state of actual coexistence with p ; and let y be the motion, of which q is susceptible.

Then, according to this statement, the case is essentially different from what it would be, if p , or q , either of them, was present alone : for, in that case, there would be only *one* relation of the present to the future ; consisting in $p+0 \dots x-0$; or else, in $q+0 \dots y-0$. But since, according to the present statement, p and q are both present, therefore, there are *two* relations of present matter to future motion. One of these relations is $p+q \dots x-q$, and the other is $q+p \dots y-p$. Hence results the following arith. proportions : viz. $p+0 \dots x-0 :: p+q \dots x-q$; and, $q+0 \dots y-0 :: q+p \dots y-p$. These proportions are of that kind, which is called *inverse*. And, in this case, *more* requires *less* ; for the third term is greater than the

first; and requires the fourth to be less than the second. Since $p+q$ is *greater* than $p+0$; therefore, $x-q$ is proportionably *less* than $x-0$. And since $q+p$ is *greater* than $q+0$; therefore, $y-q$ is proportionably *less* than $y-0$.

Hence it is evident; That, in consequence of q 's being present with p , such a degree of motion, as is equal to q , will be transferred from the future to the present; or from x to p . And in consequence of p 's being present with q , such a degree of motion, as is equal to p , will be transferred from the future to the present; or from y to q . And hence it is, that p and q , by both existing together in the present time, have a mutual effect on each other. For the particle, q , by being present with p , does, to a certain degree, diminish p 's future motion; and therefore it causes a certain degree of motion to be present in addition to p . And the particle, p , by being present with q , does, to a certain degree, diminish q 's future motion; and therefore it causes a certain degree of motion to be present in addition to q . For to cause any degree of motion to be wanting in the future, is the same as to cause it to be present. Hence it follows; That q , being present with p , is the *cause* of motion's being present in addition to q .

Let us now proceed to make another statement.

3. Let r be the sum of any number of particles, so combined together, as to form one whole body of matter. Then, from the preceding principles, it is evident, that every single particle, contained in r , would be in a state of motion. But if there was only this one body in the universe; then it would always remain in the same place, continually turning round its own axis. When it

is said, That the body of matter, r , if it existed alone, would always remain in the same place, the meaning is; That, though every particle would revolve round the axis of the whole body; yet the centre of the body itself, would always be coincident with the same point of absolute space. And consequently it would have, as we may say, a diurnal, but no annual motion.

4. Let r be one body of matter, as before; and let c be another body, in a state of coexistence with r . Then each of the two bodies, r and c , will have a twofold motion; viz. *one*, causing each of the bodies to turn round its own axis; and *another*, causing each of them to revolve round one common centre. It is the last of these two kinds of motion, which we shall now take for the subject of consideration. And since this last is intirely distinct from the first, we shall treat of it, in the same manner, as if the first had no existence. For that kind of motion, by which any body of matter turns round its own axis, has no effect on that, by which it revolves round some central body.

With respect to the two bodies, c and r , let us suppose the quantity of matter, contained in c , to be a thousand times as great, as that, which is contained in r Then, if there was no other matter in the universe, but only what these two bodies contain; they would, even though situated at any finite distance apart, with nothing but pure space intervening, have a mutual effect on each other. And, in this case, the result of their operations will be such, as to constitute a perfect balance. That is, the whole momentum, or force of r will be perfectly equal to that of c . And since the quantity of matter, contained in r , is, by the statement, only one thousandth part as

great, as what is contained in c ; therefore, the motion of r will be a thousand times as great as the motion of c For it has already been observed, That, in the system of matter and motion, there is a *relation* of the present to the future: the first term of which is present matter, and the second is future motion. And such is the nature of this relation, that the second term will be inversely as the first. Therefore, the greater the degree of present matter, the less will be the degree of future motion; and vice versa. Therefore, the degree of present motion will be directly as the degree of present matter. Consequently; if the two quantities of matter, r and c , are both present; then the present motion of r will be directly as c , and that of c will be directly as r .

Let the future motion, to which r would relate, if r was present alone without c , be m ; and let the future motion, to which c would relate, if c was present alone without r , be n . Then the actual existence of motion, in the *present*, must be estimated according to the *want*, or *diminution* of it, in the *future*. For, in the system of matter and motion, there is, as we have said, a relation between the present and the future. And hence it is, that THAT, which is the CAUSE of the *want*, or *diminution*, of *future* motion, is also the CAUSE of the actual existence of *present* motion. Therefore, if c existed alone, without any other quantity of matter; then the effect, that c would have, in diminishing future motion, would be according to the *difference* between c and $c+0$. Or if r existed alone; then the effect, that r would have, in diminishing future motion, would be according to the *difference* between r and $r+0$. But there is not, in either of these cases, any difference: therefore, if c or r ex-

isted alone; then there would be nothing to produce the want, or *diminution* of future motion; and consequently, no motion would be present, in addition to c or r .

In this case, therefore, the relation of the present to the future would be $r+0 \therefore m-0$, or $c+0 \therefore n-0$. The real fact, however, is, that neither r nor c is present *alone*; but they are *both* present, in a state of coexistence with each other; and this essentially alters the case, from what it would be, if either r or c was present alone. For *then* the relation of the present to the future would be $r+0 \therefore m-0$, or $c+0 \therefore n-0$. But since r and c are in a state of coexistence; therefore, the actual relation of the present to the future is $r+c \therefore m-c$, and $c+r \therefore n-r$. Hence arises the following universal arithmetical proportions: viz. $r+0 \therefore m-0 :: r+c \therefore m-c$; & $c+0 \therefore n-0 :: c+r \therefore n-r$. Consequently; the effect that c , being present with r , will have in diminishing r 's *future* motion, and thus producing the *present* motion of r , is directly according to the *difference* between r and $r+c$. And the effect that r , being present with c , will have in diminishing c 's *future* motion, and thus producing the *present* motion of c , is directly according to the *difference* between c and $c+r$.

Hence it is evident, that r and c are of such a nature, that neither of them has any effect in producing its *own* motion; but it is the *difference* between r and $r+c$, that is, it is c itself, that produces the motion of r ; and it is the *difference* between c and $c+r$, that is, it is r itself, that produces the motion of c . For, if r was present alone; then the whole of r 's motion would be *future*; and therefore, no part of it would be *present*. But since c is present with r ; therefore, r 's *future* motion is as much *less* than it would be, if r was present alone, as the difference

between r and $r+c$ is *greater*, than the difference between r and $r+0$. Consequently; since c is present with r ; therefore, r 's *present* motion is as much *greater*, than it would be, if r was present alone, as the difference between r and $r+c$ is *greater*, than the difference between r and $r+0$. Again; if c was present alone; the whole of c 's motion would be *future*; and therefore, no part of it would be *present*. But since r is present with c ; therefore, c 's future motion, &c. (*mutatis mutandis*,) as before.

Hence it is evident, that c is the direct CAUSE of the present motion of r ; and that r is the direct CAUSE of the present motion of c . We shall now just take a comparative view of the three following cases.

First; if r had always, from its first creation, existed alone, without any other quantity of matter; then the whole of r 's motion would have continued to be absent, or future. For, in this case, there would have been nothing to diminish r 's future motion; therefore, there would have been no cause, why any part of it should be present. Consequently, r , being destitute of present motion, would have had nothing to *limit the time* of its *continuing* to exist *in one place*; it would, therefore, have remained in a state of unlimited rest, and never have been transferred from the place of its first existence.

Secondly; if another body of matter, c , had once been in a state of coexistence with r , and then had been annihilated; leaving r alone; in this case, r , in consequence of c 's having once coexisted with it, would have had a simple motion. And, by *that*, it would have been transferred from one place to a second; and then from the second to a third, &c. for ever advancing forward, in a

rectilinear direction. In this case, therefore, r would never have returned to the same place, from which it had, by its motion, been, at any time, transferred. The reason is, because c , which first had given motion to r , having been annihilated, nothing would have remained to cause r to have deviated from the direction of a right line.

Thirdly ; if, instead of r 's having always existed alone ; and instead of c 's having once coexisted with r , and then been annihilated, c had not only *once* coexisted with r , but had always *continued* in a state of coexistence ; then, in this case, r would neither have always remained in the place of its first existence ; nor would it have left that place, so as never to have returned to it again. But c would have had such a commanding influence over r , as to have always kept it confined within certain limits ; causing it to repeatedly leave its place, and always move, in such a direction, as to return, at stated periods, to the same place again.

Now with regard to the three different cases, that have been stated, it is the last, and that only, which is actually conformable to the real state of things, in the material system. For c has not only *once* coexisted with r , so as to give it motion, at first ; but c has always *continued* in a state of coexistence ; and therefore, it has been incessantly operating, in such a manner, as to constantly govern and regulate the motion, which it first produced. Consequently, r is laid under such restrictions by c , that it can neither remain in a state of unlimited rest, nor advance forward in a direct course ; and, therefore, it must, in the direction of a line, which being continued, returns into itself, always be transferred from place to place, and thus

perform a regular series of periodical revolutions round c , as its central body. (See the diagram, p. 365.)

That influence, which regulates the motion of r , by causing it to continually deflect from a rectilinear course, is, when it is considered as residing in the central body, c , called *attraction*; but when the revolving body, r , is considered as being the subject of it, then it is termed *gravitation* or *gravity*. It is, however, a matter of indifference which of those denominations it receives; we may, therefore, either call it the *attraction* of c , or the *gravity* of r .

From the universal principles, that have now been advanced, relative to the general nature and the first origin of motion, we shall deduce the laws, which regulate the particular motions of all revolving bodies. And, for this purpose, we shall assume only two bodies of matter, without reference to any other material substance whatever; so that the several statements, which are to be made, may not be encumbered with any adventitious circumstances, which are not requisite for the illustration of the principal subject, which is now to be considered.

Let c and r , as before, be two bodies of matter, of which c is so much larger than r , as to have such a commanding influence, as to cause r to revolve round c , as its central body. Let c be supposed, for instance, to be a thousand times as great as r , in respect to its *quantity* of *matter*; for the *magnitudes* or *superficial contents* of the two bodies is something, which, in the present case, is merely circumstantial. It has been already observed, (p. 363) That in the doctrine of circular motion, six things are to be distinctly considered; viz. *quantity* of *matter*; *proximity*; *distance*; *gravity*; *velocity*; and

periodical time. c , having once given motion to r , must always after that, continue to operate on it to regulate the motion, which it first produced. And this regulating influence, which the central body, c , has on the revolving body, r , is constantly renewed; because the central body, c , by continually coexisting with the revolving body, r , always relates to the *future* motion of r ; and from this relation results a continual series of new influences; in consequence of which, r has a constant tendency to deviate from that rectilinear direction, which it would otherwise take. That is, r , by virtue of the renewed influence, which is continually flowing from the future, in consequence of the relation, which c always has to the future motion of r , constantly revolves round c as its central body. And the attraction of c , or, which is the same, the gravity of r , (while r remains at the same distance) is always exactly as the quantity of matter contained in c . But if the quantity of matter remains the same, and the distance is varied; then the gravity will be inversely as the square of the distance. If the quantity of matter and the distance are *both varied*; then the gravity will be *directly* as the *quantity of matter* and *inversely* as the *square of the distance*.

Hence there are three general cases; the first case is that in which the quantity of matter remains the same, while the distance is supposed to be varied. The second is that, in which the distance remains the same, while the quantity of matter is varied. And the third is that, in which the quantity of matter and the distance are *both varied*.

And here, it will be obvious to the observant reader, that, when mention is made of the quantity of matter's

being varied, it is not to be supposed, that any one quantity, considered absolutely in itself, admits of any variation, in respect to its degree. But it will be easily conceived, that a comparative view may be taken of *different* quantities. Thus; let b and c be two quantities of matter. Then b , considered absolutely, is just what it is, and is neither greater nor less. But c , when it is compared with b , may be supposed to be equal to b ; or it may be supposed to be greater or less, in any proportion. If c is equal to b ; then c will be as 1. If c is twice or three times, &c. as great as b ; then c will be as 2, or 3, &c. If c is only one half, or one third, &c. as great as b ; then c will be as $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$, &c. Hence it is evident, that there is a foundation for making a variety of statements, with respect to the *quantity of matter* contained in c . And the same general observations will apply, with regard to the *variation* of the *distance*, as well as of the quantity of matter. We shall exemplify the three different cases, relating to revolutionary motion, by making a number of particular statements.

Case 1. Let the *quantity of matter* in the central body be supposed to be PERMANENT; and the *distance* between the central, and the revolving body to be VARIABLE. Then :

1. If the distance is 1; the proximity will be 1; the the gravity, 1; the velocity, 1; and the periodical time, 1.

2. If the distance is 4; the proximity will be $\frac{1}{4}$; the gravity, $\frac{1}{16}$; the velocity, $\frac{1}{2}$; and the periodical time, 8.

3. If the distance is 9; the proximity will be $\frac{1}{9}$; the gravity, $\frac{1}{81}$; the velocity, $\frac{1}{3}$; and the periodical time, 27.

4. If the distance is $\frac{1}{4}$; the proximity will be 4; the gravity, 16; the velocity, 2; and the periodical time, $\frac{1}{8}$.

5. If the distance is $\frac{1}{9}$; the proximity will be 9; the gravity, 81; the velocity, 3; and the periodical time, $\frac{1}{27}$. And so of the rest.

In what has now been exemplified, it is universally the case, That the gravity of r is always inversely as the square of the distance. Hence, if the distance is 2; then the gravity will be $\frac{1}{4}$. For the square of 2 is 4; and 4 (that is, $\frac{4}{1}$) being inverted, is $\frac{1}{4}$. If the distance is 3; then the gravity will be $\frac{1}{9}$. For the square of 3 is 9; and 9 (or $\frac{9}{1}$) being inverted, is $\frac{1}{9}$. If the distance is $\frac{1}{2}$; then the gravity will be 4. For the square of $\frac{1}{2}$ is $\frac{1}{4}$; and $\frac{1}{4}$, being inverted, is $\frac{4}{1}$, that is, 4. If the distance is $\frac{1}{3}$; then the gravity will be 9. For the square of $\frac{1}{3}$ is $\frac{1}{9}$; and $\frac{1}{9}$ being inverted, is 9. These examples are sufficient to illustrate the universal principle, That when the quantity of matter, in the central body, is permanent, and the distance is variable; then the gravity of the revolving body will always be inversely as the square of the distance.

Let us now inquire into the *reason* of this principle; or *why* it is, that the gravity of any revolving body (the quantity of matter in the central body remaining the same) will always be inversely as the square of the distance. This has long been known to be a real fact; but the *reason* of it never has, hitherto, been ascertained..... For, the cause of *gravity* itself, as well as *that* of the *mode* of its operation, have been considered as being among the inscrutable arcana of nature.

The reason, (as we have already shown) why the central body, c , has *any effect* at all, on the revolving body, r , is because c is *present* with r . If c , therefore, was intirely absent, it would have no effect. Hence it fol-

lows; That the *more present*, or the *nearer* c is to r , the greater effect will c have on r . Again; the *less present*, that is, the *less near*, c is to r , the less will be the effect. It is evident, therefore, that the effect of c on r , (the quantity of matter in c being supposed to be permanently the same) will always be *directly* as the *nearness* or *proximity* of c to r ; or which is the same, the proximity of r to c . Consequently, the greater the proximity, the greater will be the effect; and the less the proximity, the less will be the effect.

But this is not all; for there is another thing to be brought into the account. For, in order to form a true estimate of the effect which c will have on r , we must have a regard to the *distance*, as well as the *proximity*.... Because, if we take only one of these without the other, the result of any calculation, that we can make, according to such an erroneous statement, will never be conformable to the reality of things. For it is not only true, that the effect which the central body, c , will have on the revolving body, r , is *directly* as the proximity of c to r ; but also, that it is *inversely* as the distance of c from r .

Hence we have the following universal principle. The attractive influence, whic'n c , (its quantity of matter remaining the same) will have on r , will always be *directly* as its *proximity*, and *inversely* as its *distance*; and this is the same as to say, 'That it will be *directly* as the *square* of its *proximity*', which is the same as to say, 'That it will be *inversely* as the square of its *distance*'. Consequently; the attractive influence which the central body, c , will have on the revolving body, r , (the quantity of matter in c remaining the same) will always be *directly* as the *proximity measured by the distance*. Therefore, if the distance is 9, and consequently the proximity is

$\frac{1}{9}$; then the gravity or attraction will be $\frac{1}{81}$: For in this case, the proximity measured by the distance will be $\frac{1}{9} \div c = \frac{1}{81}$. This, therefore, is expressive of the attractive influence of c , when the proximity is $\frac{1}{9}$.

Again; if the proximity is 9, and consequently the distance is $\frac{1}{9}$; then the attractive influence of c on r will be 81. For $9 \div \frac{1}{9} = 9 \times 9 = 81$.

Now since the whole reason, why c has any effect on r , is because c is present with r ; therefore, the more present, that is, the nearer c is to r , the greater will be the effect; and the less near, the less will be the effect. Hence it follows; that since the *proximity* is always *measured* by the *distance*; therefore, the attractive influence of c on r (supposing the quantity of matter in c to remain the same) will always be *directly* as the square of the *proximity*; or, which is the same, it will always be *inversely* as the square of the distance. The velocity of r will be directly as the square root of the proximity; that is, inversely as the square root of the distance; and the square of the periodical time will be directly as the cube of the distance; that is, inversely as the cube of the proximity.

Case 2. Let the *distance*, between the central and the revolving body, be supposed to be PERMANENT; and the *quantity of matter* in the central body to be VARIABLE. Then:

1. If the quantity of matter is 1; the gravity will be 1; the velocity, 1; and the periodical time, 1.

2. If the quantity of matter is 4; the gravity will be 4; the velocity, 2; and the periodical time, $\frac{1}{2}$.

3. If the quantity of matter is 9; the gravity will be 9; the velocity, 3; and the periodical time, $\frac{1}{3}$.

4. If the quantity of matter is $\frac{1}{4}$; the gravity will be $\frac{1}{4}$; the velocity, $\frac{1}{2}$; and the periodical time, 2.

5. If the quantity of matter is $\frac{1}{9}$; the gravity will be $\frac{1}{9}$; the velocity, $\frac{1}{3}$; and the periodical time, 3. And so of the rest.

In the case, that has now been exemplified, the gravity of the revolving body, r , is always directly as the quantity of matter, contained in c . Because c , by its always being in a state of coexistence with r , continually does, according to the quantity of matter which it contains, diminish the *future* motion of r ; and therefore, continually adds a new degree of motion to the *present*. The velocity of r , in this case, is always directly as the square root of the quantity of matter contained in c . The reason is, because such a degree of velocity is exactly counterbalanced by the gravity of r . And by the combination of these two forces (the gravity and the velocity) counterbalancing each other, r is made to revolve round c , in a stated length of duration. The periodical time is, in this case, always inversely as the square root of the quantity of matter contained in c . The reason of this is obvious. For since the velocity is always directly as the square root of the quantity of matter, contained in c ; and the periodical time (the distance remaining the same) is always inversely as the velocity: Therefore, the periodical time must be inversely as the square root of the quantity of matter contained in c .

Case 3. Let the *quantity of matter* in the central body, and the *distance* between the central, and the revolving body, be *both* supposed to be *variable*.

Here let it be observed; That whenever the quantity of matter is mentioned, it always refers to that, which is contained in the *central* body; but by the gravity, the

velocity, and the periodical time, is meant that, which belongs to the *revolving* body. The distance and proximity are common to both, and therefore, may be indifferently applied to either.

In the doctrine of revolutionary motion, we have the following general principles, which will universally apply, with respect to all revolving bodies, in regard to their gravities, velocities, and periodical times; whatever may be the quantity of matter, or the distance of the central body.

1. The gravity will always be directly as the quantity of matter, multiplied by the proximity, and divided by the distance; or, which is the same, it will be as the quantity of matter, multiplied by the square of the proximity; or, which is still the same, it will be as the quantity of matter, divided by the square of the distance.

In order to illustrate this universal principle; let m be the quantity of matter; n , the distance; x , the proximity; and g , the gravity. Then we shall have the three following universal theorems.

$$(1.) mx \div n = g. \quad (2.) mxx = g. \quad (3.) m \div nn = g.$$

These theorems may be exemplified by numbers.

Suppose $m=12$, and $n=2$; then will $x=\frac{1}{2}$. Then we shall have $mx \div n = 12 \times \frac{1}{2} \div 2 = 3$. $mxx = 12 \times \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} = 3$. $m \div nn = 12 \div (2 \times 2) = 3$.

2. The velocity will always be as the square root of the quantity of matter, multiplied by the proximity; or, which is the same, it will be as the square root of the quantity of matter, divided by the distance. That is; divide the quantity of matter by the distance, and extract the square root of the quotient; or, multiply the quantity of matter by the proximity, and extract the square

root of the product; and the result of the operation, in either case, will give the velocity. Hence we have the two following universal theorems.

Let v be the velocity; and the other symbols, m, n, x , as before. Then we shall have,

$$(1.) \sqrt{m \div n} = v. \quad (2.) \sqrt{mx} = v.$$

These theorems may be exemplified by numbers.

Suppose, for instance, $m=16$, and $n=4$; then will $x = \frac{1}{4}$.

Then we shall have $\sqrt{m \div n} = \sqrt{16 \div 4} = 2 = v$. And also $\sqrt{mx} = \sqrt{16 \times \frac{1}{4}} = 2 = v$. Again; Suppose $m=9$, and $n = \frac{1}{4}$; then will $x = 4$.

Consequently; $\sqrt{m \div n} = \sqrt{9 \div \frac{1}{4}} = 6$.

And $\sqrt{mx} = \sqrt{9 \times 4} = 6$.

3. The periodical time will always be as the distance, divided by the velocity; and the square of the periodical time, multiplied by the quantity of matter, will always be as the cube of the distance. Hence we shall have the following theorems.

Let p be the periodical time; and the rest as before.

Hence we shall have, (1.) $n \div v = p$. (2.) $mn \div m = pp$.
(3.) $\sqrt{nm \div m} = p$.

Explanation. The square of the periodical time, multiplied by the quantity of matter, is equal to the cube of the distance. Thus; $nm = ppm$. Divide both sides of the equation by m , and it will be $nm \div m = pp$. Extract the square root of the equation, and it will be $\sqrt{nm \div m} = p$.

The product of the proximity, velocity, and periodical time, of every revolving body, is always 1. Hence we have the following universal THEOREM: $xvp = 1$.

We shall now collect into one view the several THEOREMS, or universal principles, that have been expressed,

relative to every revolving body, in respect to its gravity, velocity, and periodical time.

Let m be the quantity of matter contained in any central body. And let n be the distance; x , the proximity; g , the gravity; v , the velocity; and p , the periodical time, of any revolving body:

UNIVERSAL THEOREMS.

$$\text{I. } mx \div n = mxx = m \div nn = g.$$

$$\text{II. } \sqrt{(m \div n)} = \sqrt{mx} = v.$$

$$\text{III. } n \div v = \sqrt{(nnn \div m)} = p.$$

$$\text{IV. } ppm = nnn = 1 \div xxx.$$

$$\text{V. } xvp = 1.$$

From these theorems, several others may, by the ingenious reader, very easily be deduced. The theorems may likewise be changed into proportions; two or three examples of which are the following.

$$(1.) 1 : xx :: m : g. \quad (2.) m : v :: v : x.$$

$$(3.) 1 : x :: v : \frac{1}{p}. \quad (4.) 1 : \frac{1}{x} :: \frac{1}{v} : p, \text{ \&c.}$$

From the fourth theorem we may always find the distance of any revolving body, r , from its central body, c , by having only the quantity of matter, in the central body, and the periodical time of the revolving body, given. The theorem, expressed in words, is this: The square of the periodical time, multiplied by the quantity of matter, in the central body, is always directly as the cube of the distance; or, which is the same, it is inversely as the cube of the proximity. Hence it follows; That, since the periodical times of the planets, belonging to our solar system, have been exactly ascertained by observation, their *relative* distances from the Sun may be determined, with the greatest degree of precision. That is; fixing on the distance of the Earth, as the standard, the propor-

tional distances of the other planets may, by their periodical times, be exactly known.

From the preceding observations, it is evident ; That the gravity, velocity, and periodical time, of any revolving body, r , are always exactly proportional to the quantity of matter, contained in the central body, c , together with the distance and the proximity. For c not only produces motion in r , or gives it a certain degree of velocity ; but it also produces a *peculiar kind* of motion ; viz. that, by which r is confined within certain limits. This confinement results from the relation of the velocity of r to the proximity. The velocity of r has a continual tendency to carry it to a greater and greater distance from any point of space, in which it does, at any time, exist. This tendency, however, is continually counteracted by the relation, which the velocity of r has to the proximity. For the velocity of r has the same relation to the proximity, as the quantity of matter in c has to the velocity of r . For, $m : v :: v : x$. Therefore, since v is a mean proportional between m and x , its tendency to carry r beyond the limits, prescribed by m and x , is continually counteracted. And this counteractive influence, by which r is prevented from transgressing its just bounds, is what we call GRAVITY, OR ATTRACTION.

From what has been observed, in the preceding pages, it is evident, that matter is the cause of original, or primitive motion. For, let c and r be two bodies of matter. Then these two bodies, without reckoning into the account any other material substance whatever, and without presupposing any degree of motion in either of them, will, in consequence of their relation to the FUTURE, have a mutual effect on each other, in the production of PRESENT motion, directly according to the quantity of

matter, which each of them contains. That is, c , by diminishing the *future* motion of r , will produce a proportional degree of *present* motion in r ; and r , by diminishing the *future* motion of c , will produce a proportional degree of *present* motion in c . For since the present is inversely as the future; that is, the less the future, the greater the present; therefore, the *increase* of the present motion of c and r will be exactly proportional to the *diminution* of the future motion of each respectively. And the diminution of their future motions will be according to their respective quantities of matter. Suppose, that the quantity of matter contained in c , is a thousand times, for instance, as great as that which r contains.... Then r , by being in a state of coexistence with c , will make c 's future motion one degree less, and consequently, its present motion one degree greater, than it would be, if c existed alone. And, on the other hand, c , by being in a state of coexistence with r , will make r 's future motion a thousand times less, and, consequently, its present motion a thousand times greater, than it would be, if r existed alone. Therefore, c and r , thus mutually operating on each other, will produce a perfect equilibrium or balance. For, since c is to r , as 1000 is to 1; therefore, the whole *momentum*, or *force* of r , will be equal to the whole *force*, or *momentum* of c ; for $r \times 1000 = c \times 1$.

Hence it is evident, that it is matter, in a state of existence with matter, that produces original or primitive motion. And it is this kind of motion that carries all revolving bodies, of which any planetary system is composed, round their central body, according to laws mathematically exact. And now, if it should be inquired; how mere inanimate matter can *know* how to conform to rules so completely perfect, without any devia-

tion, in a single instance ? We answer : Mere inanimate matter has *no knowledge* at all in the case. But it is the Deity, who superintends the whole affair. With him is all the *knowledge* and all the *power*.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON MECHANICAL MOTION AND RESISTANCE,

HAVING considered matter and original, or natural motion, together with the strict mathematical laws, according to which it is governed, the next thing in order, that presents itself for consideration, is MECHANICAL MOTION.

Natural motion is, as we have already observed, (Chap. vii.) something, which is immediately transferred from the FUTURE to the PRESENT. For two bodies, being in a state of coexistence, have such a relation to the future motion of each other, as to diminish it in a certain degree, according to their respective quantities of matter. And therefore, they have a mutual effect on each other, in the production of present motion. But mechanical motion is that, which is, by impulse, transferred from one body of matter to another, and always presupposes *present* motion, in actual existence. Therefore, in estimating mechanical effects, not *matter* only, but *matter* and *motion*, or the whole *momentum* or *force* of a moving body, must be brought into the account.... And in treating on this subject, we shall, without entering into any intricate calculations, only just mention a few such plain instances, as may be subservient to the pur-

pose of illustrating the general nature and cause of mechanical motion. And in order that we may effect our purpose, let c and d be two bodies at a distance from each other, containing *equal* quantities of matter. Let us suppose, that c moves in the direction of a line that passes through d , and that d , if it has any motion, moves in the same direction as c . Then, according to this statement, it is universally the case, that c , supposing it to have a greater motion than d , will come into contact with d ; and when this is the case; then *half the difference* between the two motions will, from the nature of the case, be transferred from c and added to d . That is, c will lose, and d will gain a degree of motion equal to half the difference between that of c and d . Or, which is the same thing, the defect of d 's motion will be supplied by the redundant motion of c . And we call that motion *redundant*, which is *greater*, and that *defective*, which is *less*, than *half the sum of both* motions. Take the following examples:

1. If the motion of c is 4, and that of d is 0; then the sum of their motions will be $4+0$; half of which is 2. In this case, the motion of c is 2 greater, and the motion of d is 2 less than half the sum of both their motions. The motion of c , therefore, will be expressed by $2+2$, and that of d , by $2-2$. Here it is evident, that the redundance of c 's motion is 2, and the defect of d 's motion is -2 . Therefore, when the redundance comes to be added to the defect (which will be the case, as soon as c comes into contact with d) then they will mutually *destroy each other*. Consequently c 's motion will be diminished from $2+2$ to 2; and d 's motion will be augmented from $2-2$

to 2. For c 's motion, when its redundance is destroyed, will be, not $2+2$, but $2+0$; and d 's motion, when its defect is supplied, will be, not $2-2$, but $2-0$.

2. If the motion of c is 18, and that of d is 6: then the sum of their motions will be $18+6=24$. Half of this sum is 12. The motion of c , therefore, previous to its contact with d , will be 6 *more*; and the motion of d will be 6 *less*, than half the sum of both their motions. Consequently; the motion of c is $12+6$, and that of d is $12-6$. Hence it is evident, that the redundance of c 's motion is 6; and the defect of d 's motion is -6 . But when c comes into contact with d ; then the redundance and the defect, being added together, will mutually destroy each other; and therefore the two motions, which, previous to the contact of c with d , are $12+6$ and $12-6$, will, when c comes into contact with d , be $12+0$ and $12-0$. Once more; for illustration.

3. If the motion of c is 29, and that of d is 13; then the sum of the two motions will be $29+13=42$; half of which sum is 21. In this case, the motion of c , previous to its contact with d , is 8 more, and the motion of d is 8 less, than half the sum of both the motions. And since MORE is designated by $+$ (plus) and LESS by $-$ (minus) therefore the motion of c will be expressed by $21+8$, and that of d by $21-8$. But when c comes into contact with d , $+8$ will be added to -8 ; therefore the two motions, instead of being $21+8$ and $21-8$ (as they are previous to the contact of c with d) will *then* be $21+0$ and $21-0$.

In the preceding instances, that have been produced, for the purpose of illustrating the nature of mechanical mo-

tion, the two bodies, c and d , have been supposed to contain *equal* quantities of matter. We shall now make a different statement, by supposing the quantities of matter in c and d to be *unequal*.

First ; let us suppose the quantity of matter in c to be 3, and that in d to be 1. Let the velocity of c (previous to contact) be supposed to be 4, and that of d to be 0. Then when c comes into contact with d , it will have 3 degrees of velocity, and d will have the same number.

Secondly ; let us suppose the quantity of matter in c to be 1, and that in d to be 3. Let the velocity of c (previous to contact) be supposed to be 4, and that of d to be 0. Then, the velocity of c , when it comes into contact with d , will be 1, and that of d will be the same.

Hence it is evident, that the whole sum of the forces of the two bodies, whether the quantities of matter are equal, or unequal will be the same after their contact, as before. Respecting mechanical motion we have the following universal principle.

Let c and d be any two unelastic bodies, which are free from all resistance ; and let it be supposed, that c is at a distance from d , moving with a uniform velocity, greater than that of d , and in the direction of a line, that extends from c , and passes through d . Then it is universally the case, that, previous to c 's coming into contact with d , the *force* or *momentum* of c is *redundant*, and that of d is *defective*. But in consequence of c 's coming into contact with d , the defect of d 's motion will be supplied, by the redundant motion of c . And the motion, which is transferred from c to d , and by which the defect of d 's motion is supplied, is what we call MECHANICAL. Hence we may see the distinction between natural and mechan-

cal motion. The former is transmitted from the future to the present; but the latter originates in the present, and is that, which is transferred from one body of matter to another. For, with regard to the two bodies, c and d , whether the quantities of matter, which they contain, are equal or unequal, it is universally the case, that, previous to contact, their forces are disproportionate to their quantities of matter; for c has a greater, and d has a less, force than its due proportion; the force of c , therefore, is redundant and that of d is defective. But in consequence of the contact of c with d , there will be no excess nor defect; and therefore, the *forces* of c and d will be exactly proportional to their respective quantities of matter. We shall now produce a few instances, for the purpose of proving and illustrating this universal principle.

1. If the velocities of c and d , previous to contact, are 8 and 0; and their quantities of matter are equal; then the sum of their forces will be $8+0=8$. In this case the force of c is 4 more, and that of d is 4 less, than its proportion, according to its quantity of matter. The force of c , therefore, with its excess, is $4+4$; and the force of d , with its defect, is $4-4$. But when, by the contact of c with d , the two forces are united; then there will be no excess nor defect. Consequently; the force of c will be $4+0$, and that of d will be $4-0$.

2. If the velocities are 9 and 5; and the quantities of matter are equal; then the sum of their forces will be $9+5=14$. But if the forces of c and d were adjusted according to their quantities of matter: then each of them would be 7. But since c 's force is 2 more, and d 's force is 2 less, than 7; therefore c 's force, with its excess, is $7+2$, and d 's force with its defect is $7-2$. But when,

by the contact of c with d , the two forces are united; then the excess of c 's force will be removed, and therefore, the defect of d 's force will be supplied.

3. If the velocities of c and d are 6 and 0; and their quantities of matter are unequal; in the proportion of 3 to 1, for instance: then the sum of their forces will be $18+0=18$. That the whole force of c , previous to its contact with d , is 18, is evident. For, by the present statement, c contains 3 degrees of matter, and moves with 6 degrees of velocity. But the whole momentum, or force of every body of matter is always to be estimated, according to the quantity of matter, multiplied by its velocity. If c , therefore, has 3 degrees of matter, and 6 degrees of velocity; then its whole momentum or force will be $3 \times 6 = 18$. Consequently; if the forces of c and d , in the present case, were regulated according to their proportional quantities of matter, which are as 3 to 1; then the force of c would be $13\frac{1}{2}$, and that of d would be $4\frac{1}{2}$. For $3 : 1 :: 13\frac{1}{2} : 4\frac{1}{2}$. But since c 's force is 18, and d 's force is 0; therefore, the force of c is redundant, and that of d is defective. The force of c , with its excess, is $13\frac{1}{2} + 4\frac{1}{2}$; and the force of d , with its defect, is $4\frac{1}{2} - 4\frac{1}{2}$. But, in consequence of the contact of c with d , the forces of c and d will be united; and there will be no excess, nor defect, in either of them. For c 's force will then be $13\frac{1}{2} + 0$, and d 's force will be $4\frac{1}{2} - 0$.

4. If the velocities of c and d are 6 and 2; and their quantities of matter are in the proportion of 3 to 1: then the sum of their forces will be $18+2=20$. In this case, c 's force, which is 18, is 3 more, and d 's force, which is 2, is 3 less, than it would be, if their forces were in proportion to their quantities of matter. Therefore c 's force,

with its excess, is $15+3$; and d 's force, with its defect, is $5-3$. But, in consequence of the contact of c with d , the excess and the defect will both be annihilated. The force of c , therefore, will fall from $15+3$ to $15+0$; and the force of d will rise from $5-3$ to $5-0$. Consequently, c and d will have equal velocities. That is; the velocity of c will be 5: for $3 \times 5 = 15$. And the velocity of d will be 5: for $1 \times 5 = 5$. Once more:

5. If the velocities of c and d are 6 and 2: and their quantities of matter are in the proportion of 1 to 3: that is, $c : d :: 1 : 3$; then the sum of their forces will be $6+6 = 12$. For $1 \times 6 = 6$, and $3 \times 2 = 6$. In this case, c 's force (6) is 3 more, and d 's force (6) is 3 less, than it would be, if the two forces were correspondent to their proportional quantities of matter. Hence it is evident, that the force of c , with its excess, will be expressed by $3+3$; and the force of d , with its defect, will be expressed by $9-3$. But when these two forces are united, which will be the case, in consequence of c 's coming into contact with d , then c 's force, which, in its previous state, is $3+3$, will become $3+0$; and d 's force, which, previous to the contact of c with d , is $9-3$, will become $9-0$. The velocity of c , which is now 6, will become 3; and the velocity of d , which is now 2, will become 3.

Having taken a view of the universal principles of motion, both natural and mechanical; and having every where found it to be regulated according to laws mathematically exact; we shall now proceed to make a few observations on the doctrine of resistance; which is directly opposite to motion, and must, therefore, be expressed by a negative quantity.

Let c and d be two quantities of matter, moving in contrary directions; then the forces of c and d , being opposite to each other, one will be affirmative, and the other negative. Suppose that c contains 2 degrees of matter, and moves, in the direction of a line, that passes through d , with 10 degrees of velocity; and that d contains 3 degrees of matter, and moves with 5 degrees of velocity, in the opposite direction. Then the force of c will be $10 \times 2 = 20$; and the force of d will be $-5 \times 3 = -15$. The negative force (-15) is what we call *resistance*. When c comes into contact with d ; then the whole of the negative force (-15), and also 15 degrees of the affirmative force, will be destroyed. Consequently, only 5 degrees of affirmative force will remain. Therefore, when c comes into contact with d , then, according to the principles of mechanical motion, which have been already explained, c and d will both move in the same direction, with one degree of velocity.

Opposite motion universally implies resistance; and not only so, but resistance is also universally implied in that force, by which any quantity of matter has a tendency to retain its relative place. There are two kinds of forces, which are directly opposite to the direct force of any moving body. One of these consists in opposite motion, and the other in *retention*; or that force, by which any part of matter has a *tendency to retain* its relative place. Each of these two forces implies resistance.

Suppose that c moves with 10 degrees of force, and that d retains its own place, with 10, or more than 10, degrees of force; then, when c comes into contact with d , all the force of c will be destroyed, by the resistance of d . If c moves towards d , with twenty degrees of force,

and *d* retains its place, with fifteen degrees of force ; then when *c* comes into contact with *d*, all the resistance of *d*, and fifteen degrees of the force of *c* will be destroyed. Consequently five degrees of affirmative force will remain.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTAINING PRACTICAL REMARKS ON THAT DIVINE OPERATION, WHICH EXTENDS TO EVERY PART OF THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

WE have now taken a general view of the external mutable system, consisting of matter and motion ; and in this system, we find the following things, which are all perfectly distinct from each other.

1. Matter, in a state of rest. We have seen, that matter alone, would always continue in the same place. But any two quantities of matter, being in a state of coexistence, have such a relation to each other's future motion, as to diminish it, and thereby cause it to be transmitted from the future to the present. Hence it follows :

2. That, in the external mutable system, there is not only matter, but also motion, in addition to matter. That motion is intirely distinct from matter, is evident from the consideration, that one is an *effect*, of which the other is the *cause*. Let *c* and *r* be two bodies ; then, though neither of them is the cause of its *own* motion ; yet *each* of them, according to the principles, which have been already explained, (chap. 7) is the *cause* of the *motion* of the *other*.

3. Since there is motion, in addition to matter, there is, in consequence of this, a change of matter, in respect

to its place. For it is the nature of motion, when it is added to matter, to limit the *time* of its continuing to exist in the same place. Therefore, as *matter* is the cause of *motion's* being transmitted from the *future* to the *present*; so *motion* is the cause of *matter's* being transferred from *one place* to *another*.

4. From the translation of matter from one place to another arises *impulse*, in certain particular cases.

5. By *impulse* motion is transferred from *one* body of matter to *another*.

6. Opposite motion, and also the force, by which any one part of matter has a tendency to retain its relative place, are of such a nature, that each of them implies *resistance*. All direct motion is *affirmative*; but all resistance is *negative*. These two, therefore, being in direct opposition, will, whenever they are added together, mutually destroy each other. Thus; if any degree of direct motion is expressed by m ; then the expression for an equal degree of resistance will be $-m$. Let m be added to $-m$, and the sum will be $m - m = 0$. If the degree of motion is greater, than that of the resistance; then the *sum* of the two quantities, when they are added together, will be affirmative; but if the motion is less; then the *sum* will be negative. Thus; the sum of m and $-m$ is $m - m = 0$, as before; but the sum of $2m$ and $-m$ is $2m - m = m$; and the sum of m and $-2m$ is $m - 2m = -m$. &c.

From a review of the whole, that relates to the external system of mutable existence; we find, that all effects are perfectly regular, and are produced in conformity to those invariable laws of divine operation, according to which the Supreme Agent exerts his power, in this department

of his universal government. Every part of the material system, from the greatest to the most minute, with its exact relation to the present and the future, is subject to his all-penetrating inspection. He views every thing, as being what it is, and brings every thing into the account, which relates to the object, that he has in view ; and he governs the natural world, exactly according to what the nature of the case requires. Not a single particle, therefore, nor the least part of the intervening distance between any two bodies of matter, ever escapes his notice. It is HE, who, by his efficacious influence, and unremitting energy, connects all consequences with their respective antecedents. Therefore, matter itself, and all the endless variety of changes, that attend it, are the effects of his INFINITE WISDOM and OMNIPOTENT POWER. Consequently, what has been observed, respecting the material universe, through the whole of which we have continually had the Deity in view, is very far from being a subject of mere speculation. With the strictest truth and utmost propriety, might the Psalmist say : “Great are the works of the Lord, sought out by all them, that have pleasure therein.” (Psal. cxi. 2.) Every one, who views this subject, in its proper light, will feel, on his mind, an irresistible impression of his being in the immediate presence of that adorable Being, “the invisible things of whom from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” (Rom. i. 20.)

The Deity, in all his operations, has a special regard to *antecedents*, and produces *consequents* accordingly ; whatever they may be, as they relate to finite beings. Hence it is, that he has solemnly forewarned his rational

creatures, not to admit any *antecedent*, from which, whenever it is admitted, his plan of operation will require, that a *hurtful consequence*, should result. And he has, at the same time, made an infinitely benevolent promise, that he will produce no consequence, that may be hurtful to those, who will obey his command, and follow his direction, by not admitting the forbidden antecedent. But if, contrary to the express prohibition of Him, who has the absolute power of life and death, any will admit the antecedent, which he has given them a most strict command, and friendly warning, to avoid ; then he will certainly produce an answerable consequence, however hurtful it may be to those, who have admitted the prohibited antecedent. He will invariably prosecute his own universal plan of operation, in producing consequences, according to their respective antecedents ; whatever the consequences, in the final result, may be ; whether ultimately good or ultimately evil, as they relate to perceptive beings. For he has expressly said ; “ That his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure.” (Isa. xlv. 10.) And on this, the whole stability of all his promises and all his threatenings intirely depends. “ And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants, the prophets, rising early and sending them ; but ye have not hearkened nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, Turn ye again, now every one, from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land, that the Lord hath given unto you, and to your fathers, for ever and ever. And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger, with the works of your hands ; AND I WILL DO YOU NO HURT. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord ; that

ye might provoke me to anger, with the works of your hands, to YOUR OWN HURT." (Jer. xxv. 4—7.)

In taking a view of the system of matter and motion, we have found that Almighty Being, who at first created the amazing whole, every where present, attending, without any intermission, to the work of his hand, and continually operating, according to laws, mathematically exact, in the production of effects, in perfect conformity to their respective causes. In the exertions of his power, which are of boundless extent, he takes into the account every particle of matter, and every degree of motion, throughout the whole of the material universe. He produces, regulates, and governs, according to rules, which are absolutely perfect, every motion, both natural and mechanical. And consequently, that endless variety of changes, which material substances are constantly receiving, is the result of his all pervading influence ; which extends from the smallest mote, that plays in the sunbeams, to the raging billows of the mighty deep ; and from thence, to those stupendous revolving masses of matter, that compose the numberless planetary systems, which occupy, at proper distances, all the vast regions of unlimited space. He also measures, in the most exact proportion, that degree of resistance, which ought to be given to every moving force, that acts on those parts of matter, which, by their connexion with other parts, have a tendency to remain in a state of relative rest.

It has been already observed ; That the Deity, in that first exertion of his power, by which he created the material universe, had no respect to any *particular antecedent* ; because, previous to creation, no such antecedent had any actual existence. But he had respect to a UNI-

VERSAL antecedent ; viz. that, which was implied in his own adorable nature and glorious perfections. For such was his nature, as to render it perfectly consistent to admit a mutable, as well as an immutable, system. He, therefore, saw fit to put forth an exertion of his power, that should be as extensive as immensity, and attended with consequences, as durable as eternity. When the material universe was actually created ; then he had a special regard to the *actual state* of things, in the mutable system. There were, then, *particular causes*, according to which it was *fit* and *proper*, that he should exert his power, in the production of certain *effects*. For, when it had become a real fact, that there was the coexistence of one body of matter with another ; then there was a *fit reason*, or *proper cause*, why he should exert his power, in the production of motion, in addition to matter. In this way it is, therefore, that matter is the CAUSE of motion. And when motion exists in addition to matter ; then there is a suitable reason, or proper cause, why matter should, by the exertion of divine power, be transferred from one place to another. And thus it is, that *motion* is the *cause* of all that endless variety of changes, of which matter is susceptible, in respect to its place. Hence it is evident, that the Deity, that Omnipotent Being, who at first created the whole material system, by one instantaneous exertion of his power, takes an exact account of every particle of matter, with every degree of motion, and is continually operating, in that department of his government, which relates to inanimate existence, in the production of particular effects, according to the strictest rules ; which are commonly denominated, *laws of nature*. Therefore, that extreme degree of folly, madness, and

presumption, of which those are guilty, who openly declare with their lips, or secretly say in their hearts, "That there is no God," is too great for language to express. (Psal. xiv. 1.)

From the preceding observations, it follows ; That those, who disjoin philosophy from divinity, considering them, as not having any intimate relation to each other, have a very wrong view of those most interesting and important subjects. For, certainly, every subject is interesting and important, which is directly calculated to impress the mind of every one, who considers it, in its true light, with an irresistible conviction of the immediate presence, and the infinitely diffusive energy, of the Omnipotent, Omniscient, All-perfect Jehovah. It is proper, that perceptive beings should be governed in a manner very different from mere inanimate existence, which is intirely destitute of all perception ; because there is, in the two cases, a great difference between the *antecedents* ; and therefore, the universal plan of divine operation requires, that there should be an answerable difference, relative to the respective *consequences*. It must be remembered, however, that it is the same Supreme Governor, who rules, with absolute, uncontrollable sway, every finite existence, in the natural and moral world, through all parts of his boundless dominion. How such an absolute, universal government, as this, can be consistent with the true liberty of moral agents, will be particularly shown in its proper place.

Secondary causes are not to be supposed to possess any degree of inherent power or efficacy ; but they ought to be considered, as antecedents, according to which, the Deity himself exerts his own power, in the production of

correspondent effects. It is a generally received maxim ; That there is no effect without a cause. And this maxim, rightly understood, is, doubtless, universally true. For, the just import of it is, That the Deity never exerts his power, in the production of any particular effect, without some proper *reason* for such exertion. The *reason*, why the Deity, by the exertion of his power, produces any particular effect, is the very same, as what we mean (according to the uniform sense in which we use the term) by the particular CAUSE of the effect. For the Deity, as we have said, produces all consequences, exactly according to their respective antecedents. This we have found to be universally true, in the external system of matter and motion ; and we shall find it to be equally true, in the mental, or internal system. This method of operation is perfectly agreeable to that universal plan, which the Deity has always prosecuted ; and which he will, with resistless energy, for ever continue to prosecute, through endless duration. And there is no being in the universe, that has, or ever will have, power to invert this immutable order of things, which has been established by him, who “doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou ?” (Dan. iv. 35.)

As there are different reasons, or causes, why the Universal Agent should exert his power, in the production of particular effects ; so, “there are diversities of operations, but it is the SAME GOD, who worketh all in all....” (1 Cor. xii. 6.)

TRUTH DISPLAYED.

PART THIRD.

TRUTH DISPLAYED.

PART THIRD.

ON THE MENTAL SYSTEM; OR THAT WHICH RELATES TO
THE MIND, WITH ITS VARIOUS ATTENDANT PERCEP-
TIONS.

CHAPTER I.

CONTAINING A GENERAL VIEW OF THE MENTAL SYSTEM.

IN the whole external system of mutable existence, we never can find any perception, nor any percipient principle. For no perception can be found in matter, nor in any possible modification of it; nor in any kind of motion, whether natural or mechanical, in *addition* to matter. It is, however, an incontestable fact, that perception does actually exist. It is, therefore, an effect, of which there is some cause. If it should be said, That the Deity produces perception, by the exertion of his own power; it will be readily granted, that this is certainly true. But then, what has been repeatedly observed, must always be remembered; That he never produces any *effect without a cause*. And since he sees, and regards, every thing, as being exactly what it is, without the possibility of be-

ing the subject of any partiality, or deception ; therefore, he produces every effect, just according as he sees fit ; or, just according as there is a suitable *reason*, or proper *cause*, for his producing it ; and from this method of operation, he never varies, neither in the natural, nor in the moral world. Consequently, perception, being a particular effect, has some particular cause ; and not only a remote, but also a proximate cause. But this proximate cause, whatever it may be, does not consist in MATTER, even with all its endless variety of modifications ; nor in any kind of *motion in addition to matter*. Where, then, shall we find the proximate, or *immediate* cause of this peculiar kind of existence ? where is the passage, which leads into that wonderful region, in which the percipient principle, with its eternal series of attendant perceptions, resides ? The Universal Agent can point out the way. Under his protection, therefore, and, being led by his guiding hand, we shall now enter this awful passage ; and, by pursuing it, make a solemn transition from the *material*, to the *mental* system.

In treating on this most interesting, and all-important subject, which is now before us, the first thing, which we have to do, is to take a view of *motion*, from its first origin to its final end. All motion is originally transmitted from the future to the present. After it has been present, in addition to matter, it is then, not universally, but in some *special cases*, transferred from one part of matter, to another, till, at length, as the final result, it is wholly transferred, from *matter*, to the WANT OF PERCEPTION. Here motion, at least, such a degree of it, as is thus transferred, intirely leaves every part of the external system, and returns no more ; for it is then brought

to the last stage of its existence ; and, having produced a momentary perception, it then immediately expires..... For positive perception, having once been present, does not continue for any length of time ; but is, after it has once been produced, instantly separated from its productive cause, by receding from the present to the past, where it always remains ; and consequently, never returns back to the present. Thus we have seen one operation performed, in the new world, into which we have now entered, for the purpose of visiting the Almighty Agent, and seeing how he carries on his work, in the various departments of his universal dominion. And most solemn is the consideration ; That a work is *now* begun, which is *never* to end. For, after the *first* transmissive motion, having fulfilled its appointed commission, has expired, and the *first* perception has taken its *final* departure ; then *another* motion, having been previously prepared, by being transferred from common, to organized matter, will be transmitted, from its last residence in the material system, to the *want* of perception in the mental world ; in consequence of which, another perception will be produced ; which, having had a momentary existence, in the present, will retire, like the preceding one, to its eternal state, in the past. Thus, a *second* operation will be performed ; then, after this, a *third*, in like manner ; then a *fourth* ; after that, a *fifth*, &c. in a continual series. And, in this way, the succession will be continued, till the regular course of positive perception meets with a total obstruction. And when this, in any particular instance (and many such sad instances there are) comes to be the case ; then perception will not cease, but, the whole balance being thrown on the opposite

side, it will all be absolutely and essentially changed, to something of a nature totally different, from what it was before; that is, it will be changed, from a positive, to a negative state. It follows, therefore, that a series of perceptions, having been once begun, will necessarily continue for ever.

Hence there are two perfectly distinct causes of perception; one of which is the cause of positive, and the other, that of the negative kind. The first of these two directly opposite kinds of existence, is *pleasure*, or *happiness*; and the other is *pain*, or *misery*. If the current of positive perceptions should, in consequence of being totally obstructed, intirely cease to flow from the *future*; then *past* perception will immediately begin, and eternally continue, to operate, in the production of an endless series of negative perceptions. The past perception, thus operating, is, in the figurative language of scripture, the worm that never dies; and the negative perception, continually resulting from it, the fire that never will be quenched. And having the whole course of things, in the mental system, thus intirely inverted, implies a change, which is inexpressibly dreadful. Hence arises the infinite importance of taking seasonable care “to lay up a good foundation against the time to come,” in order to prevent such an awful, tremendous catastrophe. (1 Tim. vi. 19.)

There are, as we have just been observing, two perfectly distinct *causes* of perception; one of which is derived wholly from the external system of things, and the other is wholly implied in the disorder of the internal or mental system. From the operation of these, result those opposite effects, which constitute happiness and misery.

The first of the two causes, already mentioned, having once begun, will always continue to operate; and consequently, a current of positive perceptions will flow, from the future to the present, and from the present to the past; or else the positive series will be brought to its final close. And then, the other cause will begin to operate, and continue its operation without end. And, in this last case, all communication, between the external and internal system, will be for ever cut off; because "a great gulf," unfathomably deep, and unalterably "fixed," will make an eternal separation between them. (Luke xvi. 26.) Since there are two causes, one of positive, and the other of negative perception, and these are of such a nature, that the exclusion of one necessarily implies the admission of the other; therefore it follows; That perception, having once begun, will extend into an infinite series.... But it is an incontestable fact, that one of the two causes has already begun to operate; in consequence of which, perception has been actually present, and is now past.... Therefore, it has now become necessarily and unalterably true, that there will be an endless series of perceptions. And this immutable TRUTH, which, in distinction from all others, has the most direct and immediate relation to an ETERNAL SERIES OF PERCEPTIONS, is what we call the PERCIPIENT PRINCIPLE. This is that permanent, ever durable substance, which, always remaining unchangeable itself, *perceives* all the changes, which, in endless variety, succeed each other, in the mental system. This percipient principle, now described, is the same as the SOUL, or the FINITE MIND. It has been observed, That positive perception, after having had a momentary existence in the present, retires to the past,

and, by thus retiring, annihilates its productive cause; but the percipient principle, or the mind itself, never passes away; for it always remains present, while one positive perception after another gives its momentary attendance, and then for ever retires to the past; to return no more. But though positive perception, having once presented itself to the mind, immediately recedes from the present to the past; yet, previous to the mental system's being totally disordered, so as to be finally cut off from all communication with the external state of things, a series of positive perceptions will be successively flowing from the future to the present. But in *that case*, which implies a *total disorder* of the mental system, the series of *positive* perceptions will be brought to its final close; and consequently, a *negative* series will begin; and, having thus once begun, will continue, without intermission, till *past time*, ever swelling, like a mighty ocean, has become equal to a future *eternity*.

If you inquire, What can be the cause of this amazing change? We answer: It is false perception. There are two cases, however, in which false perception does not actually produce this effect. The first case is that, in which it has not risen to such a degree, as to dissolve the vital union between the body and the mind. For, while natural life remains, there is some communication between the external, and the internal state of things. Previous to natural death, therefore, the series of positive perceptions is not terminated. And though, in this case, false perception frequently produces that of the negative kind, or pain: yet the pain, thus produced, is counteracted, and is, therefore, immediately suppressed. And when another false perception becomes present, it will

have a momentary operation, as before. Or, in the use of figurative language, it may be said, That, after the fire once begins to be kindled, it will be immediately extinguished; and after it begins to be kindled again, it will again be extinguished. And this will continue to be the case, as long as any counteractive principle remains; even on the supposition of there being no other one, but only that, which consists in natural life. But if there should be no other than this, at the time, when falsehood has risen to its highest degree, so as to produce natural death; then falsehood, in this case, by taking away natural life, will finally destroy the whole counteractive principle, that the soul ever possessed; and therefore, will kindle a fire, that can never be extinguished, and consequently, a fire, that will eternally burn, with increasing fury. Or, to speak without a metaphor, false perception will, in this case, introduce an infinite series of negative perceptions, that is, real pain, or misery, for ever augmented, by greater and greater degrees, in endless progression.

We have observed, that as long as there is any counteractive principle, even though it consists in nothing but natural life, negative perception, if it once begins to exist, will be immediately suppressed; and if it again begins to exist, it will be again suppressed, &c. But then, in this case, the counteractive principle, consisting in nothing but natural life, is continually liable to be lost; and this, being once lost, can never be recovered; and therefore, negative perception will not only begin, but will always continue, extending itself, as we have already observed, into an infinite series.

But there is another case, of an essentially different nature from that, which has now been mentioned ; and the case, to which we now refer, is that, in which the soul, by the effectual exercise of practical faith, is actually united to the glorious Mediator. In this case, there is an entirely new counteractive principle, consisting in eternal life, already begun ; which, therefore, is infinitely above all dependence on mere temporal life, and, consequently, is a principle, which temporal death can never destroy.... This is that principle of inestimable value, which it is the grand and all-important business of mankind, now, in this day of probation, this accepted time, to obtain.... For this, being once obtained, will not only afford an absolute security against eternal misery, but will also introduce the soul, after its having passed through a short conflict with sin and sorrow, into a state of happiness, perfect in degree, and endless in duration. The soul will then be completely purified from every defilement, and always enjoy the unspeakable privilege of being rendered absolutely incapable of ever returning back again to its former state of imperfection. Its happiness, consisting in the most refined excellence, that can be communicated from infinite perfection, will be as great in degree, as its finite, but yet ever growing, capacity can possibly admit, and will rest on a foundation, as firm as the throne of the eternal Jehovah. Such a principle as this, therefore, since it is attended with happifying consequences, so inconceivably great and durable, contains a value, which is infinitely more than sufficient to counterbalance the most arduous labours of the longest life, that we have to spend, in this introductory state, through which we are

now continually advancing forward to a fixed and endless futurity.

The particular *cause* of positive perception ; *perception itself* ; and the *perceiving mind*, are all perfectly distinct from each other, and from every thing, whether material or immaterial, that belongs to the external system. They are all perfectly distinct from time and space ; from matter, in every form ; and from all motion, in addition to matter : they are likewise perfectly distinct from each other. The particular cause of positive perception, after having once produced its effect, immediately expires. Positive perception, having once been present, instantly recedes from the present to the past, and there for ever remains. But the mind is something, that never expires, nor recedes from the present to the past, and therefore, is perfectly distinct, both from perception, and also from its productive cause. It is also to be observed, That every individual mind has a system, peculiar to itself. For that series of perceptions ; which immediately relates to any one individual mind, though it may be perfectly similar to, yet is intirely distinct from, that, which immediately relates to any other. Consciousness, therefore, never can be transferred from one mind to another. And, this being the case, every individual mind must always retain its own consciousness. Hence follows a most serious and interesting consequence ; viz. That every individual mind must always remain the same identical, conscious being, amidst all the changes and revolutions, that even a whole eternity can produce.

Matter and motion admit of an endless variety of changes ; perception, also, is continually changing : for matter is changed, by being transferred from one place to

another ; motion is changed, by being transferred from one part of matter to another, and then transmitted from matter to the want of perception ; after which it immediately expires ; perception also, is changed, by being transmitted from the future to the present, and then making its final transition from the present to the past : but the mind always continues to be invariably the same..... We do, indeed, often speak of a change of mind ; but this, rightly understood, always implies, not any absolute change of the mind itself, but a change of its perceptions. Hence the mind always retains its own personal identity ; which consists, not in perception, nor in its productive cause, but in the mind itself ; which is one indivisible, unextended substance ; always remaining unchanged, while it perceives that series of changes, which are presented to it, in endless succession.



CHAPTER II.

ON THE PARTICULAR CAUSE OF PERCEPTION.

WE find, that finite positive perception does, in fact, exist. And since there is no effect without a cause ; therefore, there is some special cause of the actual existence of this peculiar effect. It is evident, that the mere want of perception, and nothing else, is not the cause ; therefore the real cause is something in *addition* to the *want* of *perception*. Having brought the case to this general decision, the only remaining inquiry now is, What is it, in particular, which in addition to the *want* of perception, is the cause of *perception itself* ? To this inqui-

ry we shall give the following direct and explicit answer ; viz. That the special cause of all positive perception is MOTION, transmitted from matter, to the *want* of *perception*. And to express that peculiar kind of existence, which consists, not in matter, nor motion *added* to *matter*, but in motion, in addition to the *want* of perception, we shall appropriate the term EVIDENCE. Hence it follows, that EVIDENCE is the proximate, or immediate cause of all positive perception. When motion is actually transferred from matter to nothing but the want of perception, it is then brought to the last stage of its existence. It produces perception ; which, having had a momentary existence in the present, immediately retires to the past : And, by thus retiring, it is separated from, and, therefore, annihilates, its productive cause. The cause of positive perception, therefore, ceases to exist, immediately after the perception, which it has produced, has once been present. But the perception itself retires to a separate state, in which it always remains. After one particular cause has ceased to exist, then another will succeed ; in consequence of which, another perception will be present. And thus the series of successive operations will always be continued, till by the introduction of a perfect degree of false perception, without any counteractive principle, the mental system is finally cut off from all communication with the external state of things. And whenever this comes to be the case ; then the scale will be intirely turned the opposite way, to what it was before. For such a false perception, having once been present, will take an eternal possession of the past, and therefore, since there will be nothing to counteract it, will for ever continue to operate, in the production of an infinite

series of perceptions of a nature directly contrary to those, which were produced by that series of causes, which were successively operating, previous to this tremendous revolution.

We have now brought the question, respecting the particular cause of finite perception, to a decision. The cause of all negative perception is falsehood; according to what has just been explained. And the particular cause of all finite positive perception is EVIDENCE. The particular cause of finite positive perception, therefore, is not matter, in any state, nor with any modification whatever; nor motion, in any degree or direction, in addition to matter; but it is motion, in addition to the *want* of perception. For in the mental system, there is a relation of the present to the future. The present term of this relation, in its original state, consists in nothing but the *want* of perception, and the future term consists in perception itself. Such is the nature of this relation, that, whenever the present term is changed *directly*; then the future term will be changed *inversely*. Therefore, whenever the present is, in any degree, increased; then the future will be proportionably diminished. Previous to the actual addition of any thing to nothing but the want of any perception, the perception itself is future and the want of it is present. But, in consequence of the actual addition of something to nothing but the want of any perception, the state of things will be directly the reverse of what it was before; for whenever there is such an addition, then the WANT of the perception will be FUTURE, and the PERCEPTION ITSELF will be actually PRESENT. That is, such an addition will be the proper antecedent, or cause, of which present perception will be the corres-

pendent consequence, or effect. For that, which is the cause of any perception's being *wanting* in the future, is the very same as the cause of its being transmitted from the *future* to the *present*. And after one positive perception has once been present, it will be immediately past; and, being past, it will be so separated from its productive cause, as to reduce it to a state of nonexistence. And after one particular cause has ceased to exist, another will succeed; in consequence of which another perception will be present, &c. according to what has been already explained. Hence there will, unless falsehood should fatally interpose and turn the whole course of perception intirely a different way, be a succession of particular causes, productive of positive perceptions, in a series extending to infinity.

There is, therefore, a foundation for a most wonderful intercourse to be carried on between the material, and the mental system. And it is by *motion*, that a mutual communication is, in a very surprising manner, both ways extended: this is the grand instrument, which the Deity, in the exertions of his power, employs for this purpose. It will be remembered, that we use the term, *motion*, not to signify any of the changes or modifications of matter, but, to signify that kind of existence, which, in its external state, is the cause of those changes; and which, in its internal state, is the cause of all those fleeting existences, which, continually flowing from the future, successively present themselves to the mind, and having given a momentary attendance, for ever retire. As motion is perfectly distinct from matter; so perception is perfectly distinct from them both. Matter, however, is the cause of motion; and motion, in its external state,

or while it exists with matter, is the cause of all that endless diversity of changes, of which matter is susceptible. For it is the nature of motion, while it is in a state of combination with matter, to *limit the time* of its continuing to exist, in any one place; and therefore it is the cause of all the changes of matter, in respect to its place. And motion, in its *internal state*, or when it is transferred from matter to nothing but the want of perception, does, by changing the relation of the present to the future, become the cause of perception's being transmitted from the future to the present, to give, in a state of momentary existence, its attendance on the mind; and then, taking its final leave, to retire for ever to the past.

Since matter, in all the possible changes and modifications of which it is susceptible, does, in the very nature of it, always require some particular *place* for its existence; therefore it cannot be made use of for the immediate purpose of producing perception, which has an essential relation to *time*, but does not, like matter, require any particular *place*. And since there are, in the external mutable system, only two kinds of existence, matter and motion; and since matter cannot be admitted into the internal system, in which there is no place to receive it; motion, therefore, only remains, as that alone, which is capable of being admitted. Consequently motion, being of such a nature, as not to render it necessary, that it should always continue to exist in a state of combination with matter, may, therefore, after having been once communicated to a peculiar system of organized matter, which by infinite wisdom has been prepared for this special purpose, be then immediately transferred from that, to nothing but the want of perception, and, being thus transferred, be-

come the proper antecedent, in consequence of which, such positive perception will be transmitted from the future to the present, as the mind, while it retains its life, requires.

And this is the real fact, which thousands and millions of particular individual minds have, in thousands and millions of particular instances, actually experienced. Hence may be seen the way, in which the finite mind is furnished with positive perception, and thus, in a limited degree, holds a correspondence with the various objects, that belong to the universal system. And since words, or any other particular marks or characters, which are selected for the purpose, may, by substitution, as we have already shown, become really coincident with the *things themselves*, to which they respectively relate, therefore the mind, by the various kinds of perception, which are sent to attend it, may, while it is continually advancing forward into futurity, have an extensive and progressively increasing view of an endless variety of intellectual, as well as sensible objects. We have said, that motion is of such a nature, as to render it capable of being transmitted, not from matter in general, but from a peculiar system of organized matter, to nothing but the want of perception; and that, being thus transmitted, it so changes the preceding relation of the present to the future, as to require the transmission of perception from the future to the present, whereby the mind is actually supplied with that perception, which it wanted before. While any particular perception continues to be *future*, it is *wanting* in the *present*; and therefore is, in this case, actually *wanting* to the *mind*; because it is impossible, that any perception should be both future and present, at the same time. But

when motion, originally belonging to the external system, after having been successively transferred, by a series of mechanical operations, from one part of matter to another, till, at length, it is communicated to the sensorium, or that part of a living body, where the great Creator has put his finishing hand to the modification of matter; and where motion, having once arrived, has finally reached the very last link of the material chain, and, being no longer subject to the laws of mechanism, is immediately transmitted, from its last residence in the external system, to nothing but the *want* of perception; then it is that the relation of the present to the future will be changed; in consequence of which, that perception, which was previously wanting in the *present*, will be wanting in the *future*; and therefore will become *actually present*.

Motion, when it has taken its final leave of the material system, and is intirely transferred from all matter to the want of perception, does then, in this last stage of its existence, receive a new denomination; and is that, for the purpose of expressing which, we have appropriated the term EVIDENCE; this being as unexceptionable a term, in the extensive signification, in which it is designed to be used, as any which the language affords. For by *evidence* is meant, universally, the internal or *apparent object* of perception. When evidence corresponds to the reality of things, whether this reality relates to sensible or intellectual objects, it is then *true evidence*; but when it consists in mere *appearance* only, and does not correspond to any *real object*, then it is *false evidence*, or *falsehood*.

We have now shown what is the particular cause of perception. And the process, that has been exhibited to view, implying a succession of particular causes, and,

consequently, a series of perceptions, successively flowing from the future to the present, and from the present to the past, is perfectly consentaneous to *the nature of things*; by which phrase, let it be remembered, is always to be understood, nothing more nor less, than the plan of divine operation. For the phrase, without this peculiar signification, is atheistical; or it is, at least, intirely unintelligible, and totally void of any consistent or definite meaning. Though the operations, which the Deity, in the execution of his own universal plan, performs in the production of effects according to their respective causes, are of infinite extent and endless variety; and though some of those effects are common or natural, and others special or supernatural; yet they are all universally attended with perfect regularity and irresistible energy. The Almighty Agent never can, by any being whatever, in any case, be turned aside, in the least degree, from conducting exactly as he sees fit. Whenever, therefore, there is any suitable reason, or proper cause, why any effect should exist, that effect, whatever it may be, whether good or evil, temporary or eternal, most certainly will, by the exertion of divine power, be produced.

Should you now inquire, How motion, being intirely destitute of thought, itself, can be the *cause* of thought? You might as well inquire, How those massive globes of senseless matter, which compose a planetary system, can, for a length of ages, perform, according to rules mathematically exact, their respective revolutions, round a common centre? It must be remembered, that in every part, and every period of the whole, of both the material, and the mental, system, an Omnipotent, Omniscient, All-directing Mind produces every effect, by such means and

instruments, as are most suitable to his purpose, in the various exertions of his power. And therefore, if you inquire, How such a cause, as that which consists merely in the addition of motion to nothing but the want of perception, should have power to produce such an effect as perception itself? the answer is ready. The cause, in it itself, has no power at all; but with the Supreme, Almighty Agent is all the power. And he, seeing a fit reason or proper *cause* why such a particular *effect* should exist, does accordingly, by the exertion of his *own power*, actually produce that peculiar effect, to which the cause has a special relation. And what that special relation is, which the cause, in the present case, sustains, with regard to the effect, has already been shown.

We have seen the Deity, in the external state of things, constantly performing his work according to the most perfect regularity and order; and have traced the effects of his resistless power, and all-comprehending knowledge, through unnumbered worlds of matter with their attendant motions. And, having now come to the internal, or mental system, we still behold him, continually performing his wonderful operations. Here a most solemn scene presents itself to our view; and eternal consequences, in which *we* are most intimately concerned, are rising before us. A series of perceptions has already begun, which is never to end. For though, by the horrid violence of falsehood, unless it should be seasonably prevented, the nature of the current may be so changed, as to be necessitated to take an opposite course, to what it had in the first stages of its progression; yet, however this may be, the stream can never cease to flow; because, it has eternity itself for its inexhaustible fountain. And amidst all

the revolutions, that an endless duration can produce, the percipient principle, the mind, can never retire from its own perceptions, whatever may be their nature, whether pleasing or painful.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE NATURE AND ESSENCE OF THE FINITE MIND.

WE have shown, that motion is the particular cause of positive perception. It must be observed, however, that this is not true, with respect to motion universally; but that it is true, with respect to that particular motion, and that only, which, having been, by a series of mechanical operations, successively transferred from one part of matter to another, till it has finally reached that peculiar system of organized matter, which has been previously prepared for the special purpose of immediately transmitting the motion, which it receives, to the want of perception. It is this special motion, which, being thus transmitted from the external state of things, to the want of perception, in the mental system, changes the relation of the present to the future, and therefore becomes the particular cause of positive perception's being transmitted from the future to the present. And having shown, that, if any series of *positive* perceptions should, after it has once begun, ever be brought to a final close; then a series, of the *negative* kind, will immediately begin, and necessarily continue, through endless duration; we shall now proceed to take a view of that permanent, immove-

able, immortal principle, which constitutes *the soul*, or, the FINITE MIND.

The very essence of the mind consists in the TRUTH of the following proposition; viz. THAT THERE WILL BE AN ENDLESS SERIES OF PERCEPTIONS. Though this *truth*, has now become unalterably fixed, and therefore, is of as durable and substantial a nature, as any thing whatever, in the whole of the universal system; and consequently, will *never* have an end; yet it must not be supposed to have had *no beginning*; or to have been from eternity; for this is very far from being the real state of the case. That ever durable *truth*, in which the mind consists, and which now, since it has been actually introduced, has an indissoluble relation to endless futurity, commenced at a *particular time*; viz. when it first became *necessary*, that some positive perception should be past. In the first *necessity* of there being past perception the mind itself originated; and with the necessity of there being past perception the mind now has a connexion, that never can be dissolved. When it first became true, That some perception will be past; then was the time, when it first begun to be necessarily and unalterably true, That some PERCEPTION WILL BE PRESENT; then, therefore, was the awful moment, the solemn, the all-important period, when the soul first commenced an existence, which must unavoidably continue for ever. For, if we once admit, as a necessary truth, That some positive perception WILL BE PAST; then we must admit, as a necessary truth, That some perception, either positive or negative, WILL BE PRESENT; and therefore, we must admit, That there WILL BE AN ENDLESS SERIES OF PERCEPTIONS. And in this absolute

TRUTH, the very soul itself essentially consists. Hence there is an essential distinction between the adorable mind of the Deity, and every finite mind. For the Deity has not a successive series of perceptions ; because he eternally has one and the same all-perfect perception, comprehending, at once, the absolute whole, that can ever possibly belong to an infinite mind. His perception is not transmitted from the future to the present ; nor from the present to the past ; but is immutably and eternally PRESENT. There is, however, one respect in which the finite, may be compared with the infinite, mind ; and that is, in respect to its permanent duration, and the absolute impossibility of its ever ceasing to be, after it has once actually begun to exist. For to suppose, that *that* peculiar necessity or TRUTH, relating to an endless series of perceptions, which constitutes the finite mind, should ever fail, after it has once been actually introduced, implies as great a contradiction, as can possibly be conceived.

There are innumerable truths. Some of which are general, and others are particular. Some are originally necessary, in their own nature, and therefore have been from eternity, and will eternally continue to be. Others are temporary, being introduced at some particular time, and remain only for a limited duration. There are universal and immutable truths, relating to the Deity ; to immensity, and eternity ; to time and place ; to infinite *absolute*, and *relative* perfection. There are also truths, relating to matter and motion ; to the special cause of perception ; and to particular perceptions themselves. Some perceptions are enlarged, and others are contracted ; some are true, and others are false ; some are pleasing,

and others are painful. There are likewise truths, relating to the particular state and the final destination of finite percipient beings. Some truths are only possible, and others are actual; some are contingent, and others are necessary. But amidst all the infinite variety of truths, contained in the whole system, or the universal nature of things, to the utmost extent of all possibility, that one actual, individual, identical TRUTH, which has a special relation, not merely to any one perception, or any finite number, but to that infinite series, which extends through endless duration, is the very thing, and the only thing, which constitutes that peculiar kind of immaterial, indivisible, immortal substance, which, since it must be designated by some appropriate name, we call "the soul" or "the finite mind."

Now, if it should be inquired, In what way it is, that the mind has a special relation to an endless series of perceptions? We answer, That it is, by being *the very truth itself*, That there certainly *will*, and necessarily *must*, be such a series. That some positive perception will be past, has now become necessarily true; and, therefore, it is now unalterably true, That some perception, either positive or negative, *will be present*. You will now, perhaps, inquire, What perception is it, that will be *present*, in consequence of that, which will be *past*? In answer to this inquiry, it must be observed; That the last positive perception, that has already been present, is the last that there ever will be, or it is not. If it is not the *last*, then there will be *another*, after the one that has been. And if that other one, which yet remains to be present, should not be the last; then there will be *another*, after *that*, &c. Thus the series of positive perceptions will always be

continued, till the *last term* of the series has been *actually present*. But if the *positive* perception, that has already been present, is the last, which is ever to be present; then an infinite series of *negative* perceptions remains to be present. Or, if the positive perception, which has been present, is not the last, and therefore, if there still remains another, of that kind, to be present; yet, if *that other one* should be the last; then, after *that*, there will be an infinite series of negative perceptions. Hence it follows; that there is no possible way to avoid an infinite series of *negative* perceptions, but only by having the *positive* series for ever *continued*. For if *this* should ever finally terminate; then the *opposite* series will immediately begin, and never end. For since the essence of the mind consists in the *truth* of the principle, That there will be an infinite series of perceptions, it follows, from the very definition of it, that it has, in distinction from every thing else, a peculiar relation to perception; and that it is a most permanent substance, absolutely simple or uncompounded, consisting in unity, or 1; and, therefore, it is indivisible, and immaterial. And since it has an indissoluble relation to an endless series of perceptions; therefore, it is, in the very nature of it, immortal; by which is meant, that it has an *existence*, which must necessarily be of eternal duration. We have said, That the finite mind consists in that peculiar *truth*, which has an essential and eternal relation to perception. But from admitting this, it does not follow, that it is of any value. For it is sometimes the case, that even *truth itself*, in its relation to perception, instead of being valuable, is infinitely worse than nothing. Whether *that truth*, in which the soul consists, is of any value, or not, must

always be determined, by the *actual state* of the *soul itself*. For, if it is attended with the possibility of eternal life; then it is, on account of this possibility, infinitely valuable. But if it has finally lost all *possibility* of life, and, consequently, is inextricably involved in the absolute *necessity* of eternal death; then, in this case, it is infinitely worse than nothing, instead of being of any real value.

Since we have frequent occasion to make use of the terms, *positive* and *negative*, when speaking of perception, it will be necessary, in order to exhibit a proper idea of their true meaning, to fix their signification. Let it be observed, then, That *positive* and *negative* perception are two extremes, which are in direct opposition to each other. One is *more*, and the other is *less*, than nothing; or, one rises *above*, and the other falls *below*, the mere *want* of perception.

All pleasure, or happiness, is on the *positive* side; or that, which rises *above*; but all pain, or misery, is on the *negative* side; or that, which falls *below*, the mere *want* of perception. An endless series of pure positive perceptions, therefore, is infinitely *better*; but an endless series of pure negative perceptions is infinitely *worse*, than *nonexistence*. But since it is very difficult, if not impossible, to set this subject, in its true light, without making some use of symbols, instead of mere *words* alone, of which common language is composed; therefore, let some character, or letter, *p*, for instance, be substituted for any perception, which is *now future*; and *n*, for any one, which is *now past*; and let *m*—*m* be the *present want* of any perception. Then, from the notation, which is here introduced, it is evident: That if the

future perception, p , should ever become actually present ; then there will be the *positive perception*, $m - m + p = p \dots$. But if there never should be the *addition* of p to $m - m$; then there will be the *separation* of n from $m - m$; and, in this case, there will be the *negative perception*, $m - m - n = -n$. And here it is of the greatest importance, that there should be a clear and definite idea of the essential distinction between every *negative quantity*, in the external system, and *negative perception*. For, in the former case, every negative is *relative* ; but, in the latter, it is *absolute*. In order that we may exhibit a proof and illustration of the essential distinction between external and internal *negatives*, let A be the force of one body of matter, and C, the force of another body ; each moving toward the same point of space, B ; one, in the direction of the line, AB, and the other, in the opposite direction ; or that of the line, CB. A — B — C.

Here it is evident, with respect to the two forces, A and C, since they are directly opposite to each other, that, *relatively* considered, one of them is *positive*, and the other is *negative*. Each of them, however, considered *absolutely* by itself, is positive : for there is no such thing, in the whole of the *external* system, as any *absolute negative*. Other instances, for the purpose of illustrating the subject, now under consideration, might easily be produced. Thus : If any degree of latitude, on either side of the equator, is considered as being *positive* ; then that, on the *opposite* side, will be *negative*. Again : with respect to the different degrees of heat and cold, as they are indicated by the thermometer, if those, which are *above* zero, or cipher, are considered as being *positive* ; then those, which are *below*, will be *negative*.

But the case, with respect to the *internal*, is essentially different, from what it is, with respect to the *external*, state of things. For, in the mental system, every NEGATIVE, *considered by itself*, is really SOMETHING, which is *absolutely below nonexistence*, or *nothing*. Every *negative*, in the external system, *relates* to some *positive*, or *affirmative* quantity; hence there are, in this case, TWO DISTINCT QUANTITIES; one of which is *affirmative*, and the other, *negative*. But, in the mental system, it requires only ONE PERCEPTION to constitute that of the *negative kind*. For, when any false perception is PAST; then that *one perception alone*, without having relation to *any other*, will become *absolutely negative*, in the PRESENT. It is sometimes the case, that *n*, being *past*, is in a state of *separation* from $m-m$; and this is the very same, as for $-n$ to be *present*, in a state of *addition* to $m-m$. Now $-n$, in addition to $m-m$; that is, $-n$ alone, considered *absolutely by itself*, is what we call NEGATIVE PERCEPTION. It will be remembered: That we have substituted *p*, for any perception, which is now *future*; *n*, for any one, which is now *past*; and $m-m$, for the present *want* of any perception. It now remains, therefore, either, for *p* to be present, in *addition* to $m-m$; or, for *n* to be past, in a state of *separation* from $m-m$. In the first case, there will be the positive perception, $m-m+p=p$; but, in the other case, there will be the negative perception, $m-m-n=-n$.

An all-important inquiry, therefore, now presents itself; viz. Whether *p* will ever be present in addition to $m-m$? For, it will make an infinite difference, with respect to the mind, whether the true answer to this inquiry is on the *affirmative*, or *negative* side. Because,

if perception should flow from the future, to supply the *want* of the present ; then the balance will be on the *positive* side ; and therefore, the soul will be sustained from falling into the unfathomable depths of misery. But if the current of future perception should, in consequence of some fatal obstruction, cease to flow from the future, to supply what is wanting in the present ; then the whole state of the mental system will be intirely changed ; and things will take a directly opposite course, to what they had before. For all communication, in respect to positive perception, being eternally cut off, between the present and the future, past perception, consisting in that false perception, which has been transferred from the present to the past, will, by being *separated from the want of present perception*, then begin, and eternally continue, to operate, with a dreadful violence, beyond all possible control.

According to the statement, that has been made, it *is*, therefore, universally and absolutely true, That *p* will disagree with *n* ; or that *n* will disagree with *p*. For, if *p* will be present ; then it will disagree with *n* ; because *n never will be present*. But if *p will always be future* ; then *n* will always disagree with *p* ; because *n will always be past*. To say, That *p* will disagree with *n*, is the same as to say, That *p* will be added to *m—m* ; for there is no other way, in which *p* can disagree with *n*, but only in *p*'s being added to *m—m* ; and in the addition of *p* to *m—m*, will consist positive perception. On the contrary ; to say, That *n* will disagree with *p*, is the same as to say, That *n* will be separated from *m—m* ; for there is no other way, in which *n* can disagree with *p*, but only in the separation of *n* from *m—m* ; and in the

separation of n from $m-m$, will consist negative perception. Hence it is absolutely true, that there will be disagreement on one side or the other; that is, on the side of the FUTURE, or on the side of the PAST; it is, therefore, absolutely TRUE, That there will be perception, either positive or negative; and in this absolute TRUTH, the mind itself consists.

Since the mind, after it has begun to exist, will always be situated (if we may use the expression) between two perceptions, one of which (viz. n) is PAST; and the other (viz. p) is FUTURE; and since it does, in its own essential nature, absolutely require, that the future perception, p , should disagree with the past perception, n ; or that the past perception, n , should disagree with the future perception, p ; it must, therefore, unavoidably derive *positive* perception from the *future*, or *negative* perception, from the *past*. For the disagreement of p with n universally consists in the ADDITION of p to $m-m$; and the disagreement of n with p universally consists in the SEPARATION of n from $m-m$. Therefore, whenever the mind is once cut off from ALL communication with the future; then the WHOLE balance will be *essentially* and eternally on the side of the past; and therefore, in this case, the perception, that will attend the mind, will be continually less and less than $m-m$. For, such is the nature and the constitution of the mental system, that after the past has once begun to disagree with the future, it will eternally continue to disagree, and will, therefore, produce an endless series of negative perceptions. Hence it is an affair of infinite importance, that the state of the soul should be so fixed, as that it may always have a communication with the future, which can never be de-

stroyed. And the soul, being once introduced into such a fixed state, will then obtain the infallible *security* of having an infinite series of positive perceptions.

For, according to the original constitution of things, there never is any *necessity* of its being true, That *n* or *p* will be past, *without a necessity* of its being true, That *n* or *p* will disagree with *m—m*. Therefore, whenever we once admit the *necessity* of its being true, That *n* or *p* will be past; then we always must, at the same time, admit the *necessity* of its being true, That *n* or *p* will disagree with *m—m*; and this is the same as to admit the *necessity* of its being true, THAT THERE WILL BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE PERCEPTION, extending, in an infinite series, through eternal duration.

Since it has now become unalterably true, That there *has been* positive perception; it must necessarily be admitted, as an absolute and eternal truth, THAT THERE WILL BE PERCEPTION, *either positive or negative*. THIS TRUTH is the thing, and the only thing that constitutes the very essence of the finite mind. Hence it is undeniably evident, That the finite mind has a peculiar and indissoluble relation to perception; that it consists in simple unity, or 1; and that it is indivisible, immaterial, and immortal; being such in its essential nature, that it must, amidst all the changes which the utmost extent of possibility can ever admit, through endless duration, always retain its own conscious existence and personal identity. And here, let it be particularly observed; That the preceding mode of reasoning, in which we have argued from what *is past*, to what *will be present*, will universally apply to *perception*, relating to the *finite mind*, and to nothing else whatever. For *time*, and *finite perception*

are the only things, in the universal system, that *are*, or ever *will be*, PAST. There are frequent instances, with regard to *motion*, which, in certain particular cases, continues to be present, for some length of time, and then ceases to exist: in which case, it is not transferred from the present to the past; but is annihilated. But positive perception, though it has only a momentary existence, in the present, yet is not annihilated: but is transmitted from the present to the past: and this distinguishes finite perception from all other kinds of existence.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE NATURE OF LIFE AND DEATH, IN RELATION TO THE FINITE MIND.

WE have shown, that the actual existence or essence of the finite mind, or the soul, consists in the absolute TRUTH of a certain peculiar principle; viz. *That there will be an endless series of perceptions.* Of what particular kind this endless series shall be, whether *positive* or *negative*, is not originally determined. It *may* be *positive*, and it *may* be *negative*. The soul, therefore, is originally attended with a twofold possibility; viz. a possibility, on one side, of having an endless series of positive perceptions, or of being eternally happy; and a possibility, on the other side, of having an endless series of negative perceptions, or of being eternally miserable. And therefore, it is, in the first stage of its existence, in a state of life and death; for in the possibility of eternal happiness consists the life, and in the possibility of eternal misery consists the death, of the soul. Hence it appears, with

the highest degree of evidence, that the *existence*, the *life*, and the *death*, of the soul, are all perfectly distinct from each other. For, the absolute *truth* of the principle, That there will be an endless series of perceptions, is that, which constitutes the *essential existence* of the soul; but its *life* consists in the *possibility* of *eternal happiness*, and its *death* in the *possibility* of *eternal misery*.... The *existence* of the soul is, in its own nature, absolutely of endless duration; but its *life* and *death*, in the first stage of its existence, are, originally, both of them temporary.

We shall frequently have occasion to use the term, Mediator, Saviour, or Redeemer; and also, the term, adversary, or destroyer. By the first of these, according to the uniform sense, in which we shall always use it, is meant "the present possibility of being eternally happy;" and by the other, "the possibility of being eternally miserable."

There are two states, essentially distinct from each other, in both of which, the SOUL is capable of existing. The first is that *temporary* state of life and death, in which it is attended with the Mediator and the adversary, without having formed any fixed connexion with either of them. The second is that *eternal* state of life or death, in which it *will be* attended with the Mediator or the adversary, and will have, with one or the other, a union, that can never be dissolved. The state of the soul, therefore, in the first stage of its existence, or while it continues in its temporary state of life and death, is not fixed on either side. For it is evident, that, in this case, it is not in a state of eternal death; because it is attended with the Mediator; and it is equally evident,

that it is totally destitute of eternal life ; because it is attended with the adversary. It implies an absolute contradiction to suppose, that the soul should ever be in a state of eternal misery, as long as it is attended with the Mediator ; or that it should, as long as it is attended with the adversary, ever be in a state of eternal life. It is the grand office of the Mediator, by continually attending on the soul, to preserve it from immediate destruction ; and it is through the Mediator alone, that it can ever be introduced into a state of eternal life. On the contrary, it is the nature of the adversary, having, by the strength of the falsehood, which sin has introduced, once obtained a complete dominion over the soul, to for ever deprive it of its only Saviour, and thus plunge it into a state of endless, irrecoverable ruin.

From what has been said, it is evident, that the soul may be, and actually is, in the first stage of its existence, in a state of life and death (that is, temporary life and death) both at the same time. This temporary state will soon come to a final end ; and an eternal state will then succeed ; and this succeeding state will be that of happiness or misery, according to the connexion or union of the soul with the Deity's saving or destroying power.

Such is the very nature of eternal life, that, having once begun, it must necessarily continue for ever ; it will be as permanent as the existence of the soul itself, and this will be as permanent as the existence of the Deity. But if the all-important business of securing eternal life, by the effectual exercise of practical faith, is neglected, while falsehood, introduced by sin, which is in league with the adversary, is continually making its terrible ravages, in the mental system, till the awful crisis actually

arrives, when this merciless monster strikes the final blow; by actually depriving the soul of all its life; then eternal death will immediately begin, and, having once begun, must, from the very nature of it, necessarily continue for ever. For falsehood, having once done this infinite mischief, in totally depriving the soul of all its life, consisting in the possibility of happiness, and thus intirely cutting off, with regard to positive perception, all communication from the future, will produce that false perception, which, having once been present, will then immediately recede from the present to the past. And, being once past, it will be beyond all possibility of restraint, and will, therefore, for ever reign, in full dominion, over the soul; continually extending its inexpressibly horrid, malignant influence from the past to the present, in the production of pain, or misery, in endless degrees. And hence you may see, what is meant by that dreadful lake, of unfathomable depth; which burns, and will for ever continue to burn, with unquenchable fire; and here you may behold the worm, that never dies. Here you may also learn the solemn import of that most interesting interrogation, which was proposed by our Saviour: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matth. xvi. 26.)

It must not, therefore, be supposed, That the mind can be allowed to admit false perception, and then have no more concern with it, after its first admission; for it is the nature of it to operate *after it has been present*, that is, when it is *actually past*. The Supreme Agent and Universal Governor, will never give any liberty for false perception to be admitted into the mind, and then to quietly

withdraw, without being attended with any painful consequence.

There are, as we have said, two states of the soul; the first of which is *temporary*, and the second is *eternal*. The soul, in its first state, is in a most precarious situation, and is continually attended with infinite danger. For it is *intirely destitute of eternal life*, and therefore it has NO SECURITY against *eternal death*. It has, indeed, in this case, a complete *foundation* for obtaining the former, but yet it is, notwithstanding this, every moment, on the very borders of the latter. For though, as long as it continues in this temporary state of life and death, there is a certainty, that it will have one more positive perception; yet this *certainty* is always attended with the *possibility*, that the very next positive perception may be the *last*.... And the next positive perception, if it should be the *last* of that kind, will be the final end of all life, and the beginning of eternal death. For, when the soul has once had its *last positive perception*, it will then, after that, inevitably have an infinite series of the opposite kind. For though, as long as it remains, in its temporary state, it is always attended with the Mediator, and is thereby continually preserved from immediate destruction; yet, since the adversary is also present, therefore it is in a state of infinite danger, arising from its being every moment liable to be for ever forsaken by the Mediator, and left alone with the adversary. It implies a contradiction, to suppose, that the soul should ever have any safety, till the destroyer is destroyed, and the soul itself has an indissoluble union with the Saviour. It never can have any security against eternal death, till it has actually obtained eternal life. And eternal life can never be obtain-

ed, but only in one particular way; and *that* is, by the effectual exercise of practical faith, *before the adversary has acquired a confirmed dominion over the soul*. Hence it follows: That there are two ways, in one or the other of which, the soul will make its final transition from its temporary, to its eternal state. If sin should introduce a perfect degree of falsehood, previous to the soul's being actually united to the Redeemer; then the adversary's dominion will be unalterably confirmed, and consequently, the Redeemer will forsake the soul for ever, leaving it in a state of eternal death. But if, previous to the introduction of a perfect degree of falsehood, by sin, the destroyer should be destroyed, by the efficacious influence of the Holy Spirit; then the soul will have an indissoluble union with the Saviour, and will, therefore, be in a state of eternal life. But it never can have any safety, as long as it remains in its temporary state; that is, as long as the Saviour continues to be present *with* the destroyer; and therefore, it never can have any safety, till the Saviour is removed, in such a way, as to be restored again, by the Holy Spirit. And the Saviour, having been once *thus* removed, and restored again, will destroy the destroyer, in consequence of which, the soul, being indissolubly united to the Saviour, will be in a state of eternal safety.

There is a very remarkable difference between the way, in which eternal death may be introduced, and the method, that must be taken, in order to obtain eternal life. Only let things take their common course, till temporal death dissolves the vital union between the body and the soul, and eternal death will then be the certain and inevitable consequence. Because sin, being in league

with the adversary, always stands ready, by the introduction of falsehood, to produce infinite evil, consisting in perfect misery, of endless duration, at any moment, whenever the counteractive principle fails; that is, whenever the Mediator forsakes the soul, to return no more. But all the counteractive principle, that the soul possesses, in its temporary state, that is, all the security, that it has, of the continued attendance of the Mediator, is nothing but only what intirely depends on the life of the body. As soon, therefore, as the body dies, the eternal death of the soul, unless eternal life has been *previously* introduced, will immediately begin; and, having once begun, must, from the very nature of it, necessarily continue for ever. But, according to the *common* course of things, eternal life will never be introduced; for the introduction of this requires a *special* divine interposition.

Hence we are furnished with the clearest evidence of the peculiar propriety and the infinite importance of our Saviour's address to Nicodemus, on th is most interesting subject; a subject, without the *practical* knowledge of which, all other knowledge is useless and vain. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that, which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." (John. iii. 3, 6.) This great change, by which the soul is translated from a state of temporary, to that of eternal life, is not any new modification of what existed before; but it is a *new creation*, produced by the special influence of the Divine Spirit, communicated through the Mediator. Therefore it is not any thing, that ever will become present, according to the *ordinary course of nature*, nor be effected by any *common* volition. Con-

sequently, "it is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John. i. 13.) Though all effects, as we have often observed, are produced by divine agency ; yet *this* is so, in a *peculiar* sense, in distinction from all others. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For ye are his workmanship, CREATED in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 8.) It is of the same importance, therefore, as your salvation from eternal misery, and your introduction into a state of endless happiness, "That you put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts ; and be RENEWED in the spirit of your mind ; and that you put on the NEW man, which after God is CREATED in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. x. 22.....24.) Previous to this infinitely important change, the soul is said to be "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1.) For in one sense it is, in reality, perfectly dead. Not because it has no life of any kind ; but because it has not the least degree of any kind of life, but only that which *sin* may, at any moment, intirely destroy ; and therefore, in this case, it is *totally destitute* of eternal life. And now, if it should be inquired, Whether the soul, being in this state, has any positive perception, but only what is perfectly false ? We should give a direct answer, in the affirmative. For, if the soul should, at any time while it continues to be wholly destitute of eternal life, ever once have a perfect degree of positive false perception, it will, at that very instant, be under the unalterably confirmed dominion of the adversary, in conse-

quence of which, it will be intirely and eternally abandoned by the Mediator, and therefore, immediately sink into a state of irrecoverable ruin. For it is only by the constant attendance of the Mediator, that the soul can ever be preserved from immediate and irretrievable misery. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance to have a right understanding of the nature of life and death, as they relate to the soul, and also to know the way, in which to obtain the actual enjoyment of the one, and be effectually secured from the danger of the other. Let it, then, be carefully observed ; That life, considered with relation to the mind, universally consists in the POSSIBILITY of its being eternally happy. And life is either *temporary*, or *eternal*, just according as the *possibility*, in which it consists, is actually present *with*, or *without*, a *possibility*, on the opposite side. And, as the life of the mind consists in the POSSIBILITY of its being eternally happy ; so, on the other hand, its death universally consists in the POSSIBILITY of its being eternally miserable. And death is either *temporary*, or *eternal*, just according as the possibility, in which it consists, is actually present *with*, or *without*, the other possibility. And since these two possibilities are, originally, both of them PRESENT ; consequently the soul, in the first stage of its existence, is in a state of *temporary* life and death ; its *eternal* state, therefore, remains to be determined ; and that, which will bring the case to a final decision, still continues to be FUTURE. One of those two things, both of which are now future, and according to one or the other of which, the soul is to receive its irrevocable destiny, is the FUTURE possibility of the soul's being eternally happy ; and the other is a perfect degree of positive false perception, in

combination with the possibility of its being eternally miserable.

The possibility of the soul's being eternally happy, or that, in which its life consists, is to be considered in a twofold view; viz. as being *present* and *future*. These two possibilities are of such a nature, as that the one, which is *now present*, may be removed, so as to open the way for that, which is *now future*, to become actually present. The state of the soul, therefore, in the first stage of its existence, is this: there is a possibility of its being eternally miserable; there is, also, a PRESENT, and a FUTURE, possibility of its being eternally happy. This being the state of the soul, it is, from the very nature of it, according to the description, that has now been given, capable of being essentially changed, one way or the other. For the present possibility of its being eternally happy may be removed, so as to open the way for the introduction of a *new possibility*, viz. that which is *future*; in consequence of which, the possibility of its being eternally miserable will be for ever removed; and therefore, this once being the case, sin, with all the falsehood it can introduce, can never do it any essential injury. Or, the possibility of the soul's being eternally miserable may continue unremoved till sin has enforced it with a perfect degree of positive falsehood; and if this should once be the case; then the whole foundation, that is, all the possibility, of its being happy, will be intirely overthrown; and therefore, all its life, both present and future, will, from the very nature of the case, be irrecoverably lost for ever. For it must always be kept in view; That all life, relating to the mind, essentially and universally consists in the *possibility* of its being eternally happy; and this pos-

sibility is present and future. Considered as being present, it is the same as the Mediator, the Saviour, or the Redeemer; and considered as being that, which *is future*, and which *will be present*, in consequence of the *want* of that, which is present, it is the same as the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, or Comforter. Life, consisting in the POSSIBILITY of being eternally happy, is the very foundation of all happiness, both in respect to the infinite, as well as the finite mind. For to say, That any mind, whether finite or infinite, can have any happiness *without a possibility* of being happy, implies a direct and absolute contradiction.

If you inquire, therefore, what way there is, in which eternal happiness can be obtained, and eternal misery avoided? we answer; That the POSSIBILITY ITSELF of being eternally happy is the way, and the only possible way. This, and this alone, is an all-sufficient way. This is "a name, which is above every name." (Phil. ii. 9.) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) In this POSSIBILITY is "life, and the life" is "the light of men." This is "the true Light, which lighteth every man, that cometh into the world." (John i. 4, 9.) This is "the way, the truth, and the life." (John xiv. 6.) And now if you inquire, Whether it will follow, that you shall actually enjoy eternal happiness, in the future world, because there is now a *possibility* of your being eternally happy? It must be replied, That this consequence will not follow; and the reason is, because you are, in the first stage of your existence, not only attended with the possibility of being eternally happy; but also with the possibility of being eternally mis-

erable. And with this last mentioned possibility, you always will be attended, till the FUTURE possibility of being eternally happy, becomes actually present. But such is the immutable order of things, in the Divine Nature, that this *future possibility never will be present*, till the ONE, which is *now present*, has been, by the effectual exercise of practical faith, *actually removed*. And now, that serious and impartial attention, which this most interesting subject justly demands, will lead you to understand the *reason*, why the Mediator *must be removed*; or, in the language of scripture, *must die*; in order that such effectual influence of the Holy Spirit may be transmitted from the future to the present, as to destroy the adversary, and thus *secure* the soul from endless ruin, and introduce it into a state of eternal life. For, from what has been observed, it is evident; That there are two distinct possibilities of being eternally happy. That one, which is present, is the Mediator; and the remaining one, or that which is future; or “the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity,” is the Holy Spirit. The soul, being naturally attended with the adversary, or the possibility of being eternally miserable, is in a state of spiritual death; and never can have any *security* of happiness, without an actual exchange of the Mediator for the Holy Spirit. For, without such an exchange, the soul is continually liable to finally lose both the Saviour and the Sanctifier; and consequently, have no possibility neither in time nor eternity, of ever being happy. But, by making this all-important exchange, the Mediator will be *removed*, in such a way, as to be again restored by the Holy Spirit; or, will so *die*, as to *rise again*, armed with irresistible power, to destroy the destroyer. And this having once been done,

the whole foundation for *sin's* producing that infinite mischief, which it might otherwise do, will be intirely overthrown. And thus, death will be wholly deprived of its sting, and the grave will for ever lose its victory. Hence the infinite importance and inestimable value of the Mediator presents itself to view, with such forcible evidence, as no one, without offering the greatest violence to his own mind, can ever resist. The Mediator is the very foundation, "the chief corner stone," (Eph. ii. 20.) on which all happiness is intirely built. And therefore this being taken away, the whole building, in respect to the *individual mind*, from which it is removed, falls at once, and falls for ever. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he, that believeth, shall not make haste." (Isa. xxviii. 16.) "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, "Behold I lay in Zion, a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (1 Pet. ii. 6.) But with respect to them, that believe not, it is ordained, that they shall be confounded; that they shall stumble and fall, and rise no more. "Unto you, therefore, who believe, he is precious; but unto them, who are disobedient, the stone, which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them, who stumble at the word, whereunto they were also appointed." (1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.) Hence they are solemnly exhorted to take a method, by which, if seasonably adopted, they may avoid the dreadful consequence, which will inevitably follow from their persisting in a course of disobedience and unbelief. "Hear ye, and give ear, be

not proud; for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, BEFORE he cause darkness, and BEFORE your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness." (Jer. xiii. 15.) But every one, who will not regard the kind warning, which proceeds from infinite benevolence itself, must unavoidably experience the consequence, dreadful as it is, when it becomes for ever too late to have it mitigated, or any longer delayed. "Behold I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee. And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up." (Jer. l. 31, 32.)

There are two distinct POSSIBILITIES of BEING ETERNALLY HAPPY, one of which subsists in the *present time*, and the other, in a *future eternity*. Each of these two possibilities has an essential and indissoluble relation to the Divine Mind; and each of them has, or has not, a relation to the finite mind; just according as there is, or is not, such a thing as *its being eternally happy*.

That a BEING PERFECTLY HAPPY, together with a PRESENT and FUTURE POSSIBILITY of it, are THREE distinct things, which do really subsist, with an essential relation to the very nature of the Deity; and that these THREE SUBSISTENCES are all of the same infinite dignity, excellence or value, as the Deity himself, is something, that forces itself upon the mind, with irresistible evidence. And since these THREE glorious, and ever adorable SUBSISTENCES, have an essential relation to the very nature and existence of the Deity, he is, therefore,

with the strictest propriety, called "The Living God." (See Deut. v. 26. Josh. iii. 10. 2 Kin. xix. 15, 16. 1 Tim. vi. 15.)

The happiness of the Deity does not consist in an endless series of positive perceptions, successively flowing from the future to the present, and from the present to the past; but in one all-comprehensive perception, which, having an unchangeable relation to the one immutable, absolute Present, that is, the Divine Mind itself, admits of no succession. It must not be inferred, however, because the divine perception extends through a whole eternity, as well as immensity, that, therefore, every thing through endless futurity, is unalterably fixed. For the Deity never fixes any particular event, by his *perception*, or *knowledge*; but by the actual *exertion* of his *power*, at any particular time, whenever there is a fit reason, or proper cause, for such an exertion. The Deity, being originally invested with a twofold power, implying a possibility on each side, and thus constituting a balance of power, turns the scale, whenever the proper *time* for that purpose actually arrives. And, by thus exerting his power, introduces a necessity, which fixes that particular event, which was not fixed before. Hence it is not the *divine knowledge*, nor even the *divine power itself*, previous to its being actually *exerted*, that fixes any event.... But it is the Deity himself, by the *exertion* of his own power, who fixes those particular events, to which his exertions have a special relation. But since we have already treated particularly on this subject, we shall not here any farther pursue it. What has now been observed, has been introduced with a design to prevent any er-

roneous conclusion, that might be drawn from a consideration of the infinite extent of the divine perception.

The first of the Three glorious Subsistences can never be removed, with relation to the soul, but only by the introduction of a perfect degree of falsehood, *while the adversary continues to be present*. And if the First should ever once be actually removed; then the destroyer's dominion over the soul will become unalterably confirmed. In this case, all the Three Sacred Subsistences, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, will intirely cease to have any relation to the soul; it will then, therefore, being utterly abandoned, or given over to the destroyer, be inevitably reduced to a state of eternal misery. Wo, inexpressible wo, be to the person, whoever he may be, to whom this description will apply. "The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil." (Deut. xxix. 20, 21.) But as long as the FIRST of the Three adorable Subsistences continues to retain a relation to the soul, the SECOND may be exchanged for the THIRD; and by such an exchange, since the Holy Spirit will then be present in the Saviour, the destroyer will be intirely prevented from having any more relation to the soul, and will, therefore, in *this respect*, be for ever destroyed. For if, before sin, by the introduction of a perfect degree of falsehood, has removed the First of the Three sacred Subsistences, *in relation to the soul*, there should be an effectual exercise of practical faith; then, by the all important EXCHANGE, which, in this case, will be made, the

Holy Spirit will be actually introduced ; whereby the *soul* will be “ delivered from the POWER OF DARKNESS, and translated into the kingdom of God’s DEAR SON ; ” and, consequently, being sanctified, and irreversibly “ SEALED unto the day of redemption,” it will, by “ the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, be made free from the law of sin and death.” (Col. i. 13. Eph. iv. 30. i. 13. Rom. viii. 2.) For sin will be completely conquered, so that it never can, in any way whatever, introduce eternal death, the very foundation of *this kind* of death being intirely removed.

Therefore, what sin might otherwise have done, in framing a most horrible prison for the endless confinement of the soul, in a state of perfect misery, can never be effected. Consequently, the soul, in this case, will be infallibly and unalterably secure ; since its “ life is hid with Christ in God,” (Col. iii. 3,) it is, therefore, established as firm as the throne of Jehovah. For the Holy Spirit having once destroyed “ THE GOD OF THIS WORLD,” (see 2 Cor. iv. 4.) and thus taken possession of the soul, will dwell there for ever. And therefore, being thus, by the eternal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, united to the SON, it will have such a union with the FATHER, that the supposition of its ever being dissolved, after it has once been actually formed, implies, in the very nature of things, an absolute contradiction. And this is that blessed union, to which our Saviour has a special reference, when he says, in his ever memorable prayer : “ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also, who shall believe on me, through their word, That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee : that they also may be one in us ; that the world may be-

lieve, that thou hast sent me. And the glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one." (John xvii. 20, 21, 22.) With regard to the soul, which is once brought into that glorious state of union, which is here described, it may be pronounced with infallible assurance : " That neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come ; nor height nor depth ; nor any other creature, shall be able to separate it from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)

Since the soul, in the first stage of its existence, is attended, not only with the Mediator, but also, with the adversary, we may see what infinitely different, and directly opposite consequences *may be* unalterably fixed, with respect to different minds, according as falsehood or faith introduces them to their final destiny ; which, within the limits of a very short duration, they must inevitably receive. A number of individuals may pass along together, for a time, while they are travelling through this present transitory scene ; but when the solemn period arrives, for *eternity* to turn the scale, and some are found on one side, and some on the other ; then, having received, on each side respectively, the irreversible sentence, relative to their final state, they must be separated, without any possibility of ever meeting again.

" Eternity, the various sentence past,

" Assigns the severed throng distinct abodes ;

" Sulphureous, or Ambrosial—what ensues ?

" The deed predominant ! the deed of deeds !

" Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven ;"

The final Judge, with power resistless, " turns

“ His adamantine key’s enormous size,
“ Through destiny’s inextricable wards,
“ Deep-driving every bolt, on both their fates,
“ Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven,
“ Down, down, He hurls it, through the dark profound,
“ Ten thousand, thousand fathom ; there to rust,
“ And ne’er unlock His resolution more.”

YOUNG.

From the preceding observations may be seen, wherein consists the life, and the death of the soul ; also how to secure the one and avoid the other. It has been shown, that there are THREE distinct SUBSISTENCES, which are essential to the DIVINE NATURE. There is likewise a *fourth*, which, though it is nothing, that belongs to the immutable system of infinite perfection ; yet is really something, that relates to the finite mind, in its original state. The beneficent Author of all good has not left the soul to be attended with the destroyer alone ; but from the boundless benevolence of his nature has freely given the Saviour to attend it, in the first stage of its existence. And wo, unutterable and unalterable wo, be to every one, who despises, and finally rejects this inexpressibly dear and most precious Attendant. “ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world : but that the world through him might be saved.” (John iii. 16, 17.)

It is worthy of special remark, that the soul, even though the Saviour actually attends it, can never have any safety, as long as it is attended with the destroyer. But the destroyer will always attend the soul, till the Holy Spirit

becomes actually present ; and the Holy Spirit never will be present, till the Saviour is given to purchase it. In order, therefore, that the finite mind may be united to the Deity, and the Three adorable Subsistences, which are essential to his Nature, and thus be eternally saved from the destroyer, or in the language of scripture, that the soul may “ be reconciled to God,” a most important exchange must be made—an exchange of the Redeemer for the Sanctifier. This is represented by the Redeemer’s dying to purchase the Holy Spirit ; and this is the same as the present Saviour’s departing, that the absent Comforter may come to destroy the adversary, and, by his sanctifying or sealing influence, give the soul an infallibly secure possession of eternal life. (See John xvi. 7.) Thus the only way, in which the soul can ever be saved from sin and death, and from “ him, that has the power of death,” and consequently be introduced into a state of endless happiness, is by receiving the Holy Spirit, in exchange for the Mediator. And this exchange can never be made, but only by the *departure*, or, as it may be expressed, by the *death*, of the Mediator. “ In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will : that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation : in whom also, AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, ye were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the

redemption of the PURCHASED POSSESSION, unto the praise of his glory." (Eph. i. 7, 11....14.)

From what has been observed, it is evident that the Mediator is of infinite value and importance : for he is the whole, the only foundation of all the happifying influences, that ever can be communicated, by the Holy Spirit from the Father of lights, from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift, to the finite mind. It is impossible that even Omnipotence itself, united with infinite benevolence, should bestow any good whatever on the finite mind, *without* the Redeemer. This is impossible, because it does, in the very nature of things, imply an absolute contradiction. And that adorable Being, who is, in the highest degree, powerful, good, and perfect, is exalted infinitely above the performance of contradictions.

The Saviour, without the solicitation or request of any finite being whatever, was, by the Author of all good, originally sent to attend the soul. But it does not follow from this, that it will be actually saved. For without faith, even the Saviour cannot save it. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law ; ye are fallen from grace. For we, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by FAITH. For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but FAITH, which worketh by love." (Gal. v. 4, 5, 6.) In consequence of unbelief, therefore, the Redeemer, that greatest, best, most valuable, and excellent gift, that even infinite benevolence itself could possibly bestow on the finite mind, may be, and in a sad variety of instances, actually has been, irrecoverably lost, in relation to *individuals*, on whom it was originally bestowed.

There are two perfectly distinct kinds of faith : viz. *speculative* and *practical*. All, that *speculative* faith can ever do, is only, by its present counteractive influence, to afford the soul a temporary support. But the effectual exercise of *practical* faith is essentially requisite, in order to procure that *vital*, saving influence of the Holy Spirit, which is required to “destroy him, that had the power of death,” and introduce the soul into a state of eternal life.

When the Deity, by his efficacious grace, has once effected this all-important change, or has actually given his Holy Spirit in exchange for the Redeemer ; that is, when the Redeemer has died to rise again, and, by his death and resurrection, has become the triumphant Conqueror of sin and death, it is then, and never before, that the soul is renewed, regenerated, or sanctified. It is then “created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” (Eph. ii. 11.) It is then said to have “passed from death to life.” (1 John iii. 14.) It is then, that “the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made it free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom. viii. 2.) It can then rejoice in God, “giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made it meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light : who hath delivered it from the POWER of DARKNESS, and hath translated it into the kingdom of his DEAR SON : in whom it has redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” (Col. i. 12, 13, 14.) In this case, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, have, each of them respectively, a relation to the soul, that never can be dissolved.

CHAPTER V.

CONTAINING A GENERAL VIEW OF THE VARIOUS KINDS
OF TRUE PERCEPTION.

HAVING considered the particular cause of perception; the essence, or constituent substance of the soul; and the nature of life and death, both temporary and eternal; we shall now proceed to take a view of the various kinds of perception, with which the finite mind is attended.

All perception, according to the most general classification of it, is *positive* or *negative*. That of the first kind is, as we have shown, produced by *motion*; which is an existence of a very peculiar nature: for, when it is added to matter, it has the property of *limiting the time* of its continuing to exist in the same place; and, therefore, it is the *cause* of matter's being transferred from one place to another. Motion also has the peculiar property, when it is transferred from the sensorium, the seat of its *last residence* in the material system, to the *want of perception*, of *limiting the time* of *perception's continuing* to be *future*, and, therefore, of causing it to be transmitted from the FUTURE to the PRESENT, to give its momentary attendance to the MIND, and then for ever retire to the PAST. The immediate cause of *negative perception* is, not motion, nor any thing, that has ever belonged to the external state of things; but it is wholly internal, and universally consists in false perception. And, consequently, there is a foundation for the mind's being eternally attended with negative perception, when it is intire-

ly cut off from all correspondence or connexion with the external system.

Having made a general division of perception, into that of positive and negative, we shall now proceed to observe, That, of positive perception there are various kinds: viz. 1. True perception. 2. Perception of falsehood. 3. False perception. The first kind is that, which has an agreement or correspondence with any real object; or that, which corresponds, not only to *appearance*, but also to the reality of things. The second kind is that, which does not correspond to any real object; and agrees with nothing but mere appearance, without any correspondent reality. The object of this kind of perception is, therefore, *apparent* only, and not *real*.... Against the admission of any perception of this kind, our Saviour has given a most solemn caution, by saying: "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John vii. 24.).... Judge according to the truth and reality of things, and not according to mere appearance. Admit no perception, that has nothing but *appearance* for its object. The third kind is that, which not only does not correspond to any *reality*, but does not even agree with any *appearance*. The three general kinds of perception, that have now been enumerated, though they all have the property of being really something, that relates to the mind, yet are evidently distinct from each other.

All perception, that has an actual present existence, has a special relation to the *individual mind*, to which it peculiarly belongs. And since it is something, that exists in relation to the mind, it is, according to an elliptical form of expression, said to exist *in* the mind. It must

not, however, be supposed, that it is contained in the mind, as matter is contained in space ; so as to require extension. For it is said to exist *in the mind*, only because it exists *in relation to* the mind. So any thing is said to exist *in time* ; because it exists *in relation to time*. And, by omitting the words, *relation to*, we form that elliptical expression, which is commonly used. And the perceptions, which do, at any time, exist in any one individual mind, never exist in any other. The perceptions of any two minds, however similar they may be, are never identically the same. Every individual mind, therefore, has its own peculiar consciousness.

Having reduced all positive perception into three general classes, we shall now proceed to take a view of each of them.

We shall, first, take a *general* view of *true* perception ; and then consider the several different kinds of it, according to the various objects, to which it corresponds. True perception is universally distinguished from that of every other kind, by this ; viz. That it is something, which always does, according to the degree of it, whether perfect or imperfect, completely correspond to the reality of things. But this is never the case, with respect to any other kind of perception. And true perception is reducible to several distinct kinds, according to the real objects, to which it corresponds. In the most general view, there are only *two kinds* of real objects ; viz. DIFFERENCE and AGREEMENT. Hence, all true perception consists of two general classes ; one of which, comprehends all that, which has *difference*, and the other, all that, which has *agreement*, for its real object. Difference is to be considered in a twofold view ; viz. as

being *absolute*, and *relative*. Absolute difference is that, which subsists between the *whole* of any thing, and *nothing*; and relative difference is that, which subsists between the *whole*, and a *part*. Hence there are two kinds of perception, of which DIFFERENCE is the real object. Of *that*, which has AGREEMENT for its real object, there are various kinds, according to the nature of the agreement itself.

Every perception, which has DIFFERENCE for its object, is what we shall call, *sensation*, or a *sensible idea*, just according as its object consists in *absolute* or *relative* difference. And by the term, *idea*, let it be observed, is meant *perception itself*, and not any *object* of perception. Every idea is a species of perception. For we use the term, *species*, to signify a particular kind, which is comprehended in the genus, which, in this case, is perception. Therefore, all sensations, and sensible ideas, are *species*, of which *perception* is the *genus*. For we use the term, *perception*, in its most extensive signification; to denote all that peculiar kind of existence, of which the *mind* is immediately conscious; whether it is sensation, or a sensible idea; or whether it is imagination, memory, knowledge, or doubt, &c. Perception is something, which is perfectly distinct from the external reality of things; such as time, space, matter, or motion. It is also perfectly distinct from appearance, and perfectly distinct from the mind itself, and does not consist in any modification of the mind whatever. Of true perception there are two general classes, which we shall call, *differential*, or *intellectual*, according as its object consists in *difference*, or *agreement*. Of differential perception there are two distinct kinds: the *first* of which comprehends

sensation, and the *other*, sensible *ideas*. There are, likewise, two kinds of intellectual perception; one of which includes all *abstract*, or *universal ideas*; and the other, all *belief*. To a *particular* consideration of each of these, we shall proceed, after having taken a *general* view of true perception.

Every perception, whether it is a sensation, a sensible idea, an abstract idea, or belief, which corresponds to the *reality* of things, or which has, not only an *apparent*, but also a *real* object, is a TRUE perception. Every sensation, which has real POSSIBLE EXISTENCE, for its object, whether this object is, or is not, perfectly coincident with ACTUAL EXISTENCE, is a true sensation ... True sensation is not, by any means, altogether confined to actual existence, for its real object. How far, the various real objects of true sensation are coincident with actual existence, is to be determined, not by sensation itself, but by another perfectly distinct kind of perception, viz. belief. Every sensible idea, or an idea belonging to the imagination, which has real *possible existence*, for its object, is a true idea. Differential perception, implying sensation and sensible ideas, is accompanied with belief, which, in many instances, presents itself to the mind, with irresistible force; marking out, with exact precision, the various distinctions, that truly belong to the real objects of sensation and sensible ideas; and determining, not according to the evidence of sense, but according to the evidence peculiar to belief itself, how far the real objects of differential perception are, and how far they are not, coincident with actual existence.

But if some of the objects of differential perception have only a *possible*, but not any *actual* existence; then

how do we know, but that this is the case, with respect to them all? What evidence have we, that a material world has any actual existence? In answer to this, it may be observed; That a material world, considered as being nothing but a sensible object, is something real; that is, it is an object, which, whether it *actually* exists or not, has a real disagreement with nothing. Of this real disagreement or difference, we have intallible information, by the perception itself, which corresponds to the *difference*, as its real object. Now if we had no other perception, but only that, which has *difference* for its object; we should then have no *knowledge*, nor even *doubt*, whether a material world has any actual existence or not. For the real object of all knowledge, as well as that of doubt, is something perfectly distinct from the object of any sensation or sensible idea. The *difference* between a material world and nothing, and the *truth* of the proposition, That a material world *actually exists*, are two real objects, which are perfectly distinct one from the other. For one is the object of *differential*, and the other, that of *intellectual* perception. And each of them is perceived according to its own proper evidence. One of them consists in *difference*, and the other, in *agreement*. And the two perceptions, respectively corresponding to those two objects, are as distinct from each other, as the objects themselves. If you inquire, How the *truth* of the proposition, That a material world *actually exists*, can be proved? We answer: The *truth* of this *proposition* does not wait for any proof; but it directly presents itself to the mind, according to such forcible evidence, as is too strong to be resisted; leaving

you but only one alternative ; and *that* is, either to receive the evidence with quiet submission, or to weary yourself, in vain and fruitless attempts, to reject it. As to material objects, though we may, in particular cases, entertain some doubt, respecting their exact form, magnitude, distance, &c. yet the *general truth* of the proposition, That those objects do actually exist, operates on the mind, with an energy too powerful to be overcome, or in any degree impaired. Utterly vain, therefore, would be all our most strenuous efforts, if we should foolishly presume to make the rash attempt, to divest ourselves of the belief, that we actually have real material bodies ; that there are, in actual existence, a real material Sun, Moon, and Stars ; Earth and Ocean ; rivers, trees, mountains, &c.

If we had no perception, but only that, which corresponds to mere sensible objects, we should be in a very low condition, compared with that, in which we actually are. For the fact is, that we not only have *differential* perception, consisting in sensation and sensible ideas ; but we also have that of the *intellectual* kind ; which is, in its nature, far more noble and excellent. The highest kind of intellectual perception is that, which consists in belief. The real object of all *true* belief is *truth itself*. Truth receives various denominations according to the real state of the case, respecting it. The *agreement* of any proposition with its being true or not true is denominated *actual truth*. The *consistency* of any proposition with its being true or not true is denominated *potential truth*, or *possibility*. Possibility has various denominations. When there is only one possibility ; or when possibility is all on one side, it is then called *necessity*. When

there is an equal possibility on each side, constituting a balance of power ; then one of the two equal possibilities is *now* different from what it *will* be ; and that one, which is thus different, is called *contingence*, and is the same as that kind of *certainty*, which is perfectly distinct from *necessity*. *Truth*, in all cases, whether it is *actual*, *necessary*, or *contingent*, is the same as *certainty* ; and certainty is the real object of all *true belief*. That kind of certainty, which consists in contingency, is just as much the real object of knowledge, as that which consists in necessity. That Omniscient Being, therefore, who has a direct and intuitive view of all certainty, has a most perfect knowledge of every thing, which is *contingent*, as well as of every thing, which is *necessary*. And, therefore, from any future event's being certainly foreknown it does not follow, that the event is necessary, any more than it follows, that it is contingent. For, as we have just observed, to an Omniscient Mind, all *contingence*, as well as *necessity*, is the direct object of perfect knowledge.

We have observed, that truth is the real object of all true belief. There is ONE TRUTH, which, in distinction from all others, is the real object, not only of *true belief*, but also of *that kind* of belief, which is of the most interesting and important nature. This is that glorious and adorable truth, which consists in the POSSIBILITY of being eternally happy ; and which, as we have before observed, is absolutely essential to the very existence, the nature, and the perfections of the ever living and ever blessed God. This is that One present absolute Truth, without which, though we can *exist*, and continue to *exist* through endless duration, yet we *cannot live*, even a single moment. For whenever the soul once loses this truth,

this essential, this only vital principle, it must inevitably and instantly die, so as to revive no more. For even Omnipotence cannot communicate any life or happiness to the soul, when it has once lost the POSSIBILITY of being happy. Though this glorious, this inestimably valuable possibility, this "one pearl of infinite price," can never be lost with relation to the Deity; yet there are cases in which it may, with relation to the finite mind; and, being once lost, it never can be recovered. But the endless existence of the soul, without life, without a possibility of being happy, implies a state of misery, infinitely too great for any language to express, or imagination to conceive. "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God;" who is "the way, the TRUTH, and the life: and no man cometh unto the Father, but by him." (Heb. x. 28, 29. John. xiv. 6.)

Though truth is, in all cases, the real and proper object of true belief; and though we never can proceed too far in believing the truth; yet let it be always remembered (for the remark is of equal importance with the worth of the soul) That our highest and most extensive acquisitions of knowledge will, in the final result, be totally unavailing, without an effectual practical belief....a living faith, in that sacred, that adorable TRUTH, which, in distinction from all others, in the only *preserving*, the only *vital* principle of the very mind itself. Without this truth, we cannot please God....without this truth, we cannot live. The loss of this truth necessarily implies the loss of the Deity, considered as a happifying Being. And

the Deity, that infinite source of all light, life, and happiness.....that glorious Sun of the universe, of which our material Sun is only a faint emblem, being once lost to the soul, nothing will then remain, but only darkness, death, and eternal despair.

True belief, according to the particular state of the case, respecting it, is of various kinds, and is, therefore, expressed by various names; as, doubt, improbability, suspense, probability, knowledge; choice or preference, love, desire, hope, joy, &c. That peculiar kind of *knowledge*, which any particular person has, with regard to *himself*, respecting what he has, in any past time, transacted, seen, heard, or felt, is denominated MEMORY. In this case, the subject of the proposition, to the truth of which the belief relates, is in the first person singular; as, I have been in such a place; I have transacted such business; I have perceived such a thing, &c.

The proximate or immediate cause of all true perception, both differential and intellectual, consists in true APPEARANCE OR EVIDENCE; that is, such appearance or evidence as does, according to the degree of it, correspond to the REALITY of things. And this true appearance or evidence is the immediate object of all true perception; and this, for the sake of distinction, may be called the *apparent object*. The Deity immediately perceives, without the intervention of any appearance, every real object in the universal system; He is, therefore, Omniscient. But this is not the case with respect to the finite mind; for *that* perceives real objects, only according to the particular evidence, by which the perception itself is immediately produced. Therefore, whenever the evidence, relating to the real object, is imperfect; then the

perception, which is produced by it, will accordingly be imperfect. It must be observed, however, that evidence may be imperfect, and yet, at the same time, be true. For that, which distinguishes true evidence from false, does not consist in its different *degree*, but in its different *nature*. For all evidence, let it be ever so imperfect, which does, according to its degree, correspond to the *reality* of things, is true; but all that, on the contrary, let the degree of it be small or great, which does not correspond to any real object, is false evidence; or, to express it by a single term, it is falsehood. True evidence, being added to the want of perception, changes the relation of the present to the future. In consequence of which change of relation, a correspondent perception is transmitted from the future to the present. Which perception, having, in a state of momentary existence, once presented itself to the mind, then immediately recedes from the present to the past; and, by thus receding, leaves its productive cause in a state of nonexistence. One operation, having, in this way, been performed, then another will succeed. That is, new evidence, flowing from the external state of things to the want of perception in the present, will be the antecedent, in consequence of which a new correspondent perception will be transmitted from the future, so as to present itself *once* to the mind, and then, like its predecessor, instantly retire. And thus the process, having been once begun, will be for ever continued in a regular series of antecedents and consequences, by which the mind will be constantly supplied with new and agreeable perceptions, till falsehood, that hateful and horrid subverter of all order, intervenes to in-

interrupt this happy course of things, relative to the mental system.

Having taken a *general view* of true perception, we shall now proceed to a more particular consideration of it, according to its various correspondent objects.

CHAPTER VI.

ON SENSATION.

THE first kind of differential perception is that, which has absolute difference for its real object, and is what we call SENSATION. Thus; the Sun, the Moon, the starry heavens, the Earth, the ocean, land, mountains, rivers, clouds, wind, rain, snow, hail, thunder, lightning, trees, grass, flowers, houses, animal bodies, &c. are objects of sensation. Every true sensation perfectly corresponds to some real object; which object consists in the absolute difference between some real possible existence, and nothing that is possible. The real object of every true sensation, therefore, is really *something*, in distinction from absolute *nothing*. And if it should be inquired, What this real object is? We answer universally: That it is real *possible existence*. And in giving this answer, we neither affirm nor deny, that it is, in every respect, the same, as any thing that *actually* exists. For this is a question, which is to be determined, not by *sensation*, but by a perfectly distinct kind of perception; viz. that, which has *agreement* for its object, and which consists in that kind of intellectual perception, which is called *belief*; and all belief is perfectly distinct from sensation. For if there is a perfect degree of evidence, that the ob-

ject of sensation is the same as *actual* existence ; then we have that kind of intellectual perception, which is called affirmative knowledge. But if there is a perfect degree of evidence, that the object is *not* the same as actual existence ; then we have that kind of intellectual perception, which is called negative knowledge. Once more ; if there is only an imperfect degree of evidence of the sensible object's being the same as actual existence ; then we have that kind of intellectual perception, which is called doubt. But it must be observed, that all intellectual perception, whether it consists in knowledge or doubt, though it accompanies sensation, yet is perfectly distinct from it ; and there is a perfect distinction between their respective objects. For one consists, as we have said, in *difference*, and the other, in *agreement*..... Though it is not always the case, that the object of sensation is exactly the same, as any thing, that *actually exists* ; yet it is universally true, that every positive sensation is produced by a cause, which is derived from external actual existence. It is, therefore, just as certain, that there is *actual external* existence, consisting in matter and motion, as that there is positive sensation. For the immediate cause of positive sensation universally presupposes matter and motion. It is by motion, transferred from matter to the want of perception, that every positive sensation is produced. But, that the object of true sensation, though it is universally the same, as real *possible* existence, yet is not always the same, in every respect, as any thing that *actually* exists, admits of a very easy experimental proof, which might, if it was necessary, be exemplified in a great variety of instances. We shall just mention one of a very familiar nature, and

of which you may, without any trouble or expense, make the trial.

Take a *straight* rod or staff; put one end into the water, holding the other, in an oblique direction, and it will *appear* to be *crooked*. In this case, you will have two successive sensations; each of which will perfectly correspond to a *real object*; but it is evident, that the object of each sensation will not be exactly the same, as any thing that *actually exists*. In both cases, however, you will have a true sensation, corresponding to real *possible existence*. In each case, you will have two distinct perceptions; viz. a sensation and a belief. In the first case, you will have a sensation, perfectly corresponding to a real object, consisting in possible existence, and you will, at the same time, have a belief, that the object of your sensation has an actual existence according to its appearance. You will, therefore, have two perfectly distinct perceptions, at the same time; one, having *difference*, and the other, *agreement*, for its real object. In the second case, also, you will have a sensation, perfectly corresponding to a real object, consisting in *possible existence*; and you will, at the same time, have a belief, that the object of your sensation is different from what *actually exists*. You will, therefore, in the second case, as well as in the first, have two perfectly distinct perceptions, at the same time, viz. a sensation and a belief; one having *difference*, and the other having *agreement* for its *real object*. In both cases, therefore, you will have a *true* sensation and a *true* belief.

We have dwelt the longer on this particular example, not only, because it is of very easy application, but also, because it may serve to illustrate all other cases, with re-

spect to sensation. When we perceive things by means of the reflection of light from the surface of water or glass, the sensations, in this case, perfectly correspond to real objects, which are intirely distinct from the sensations themselves, and even distinct from any thing that *actually* exists. But notwithstanding this, those objects have as much reality, that is, as much real difference from absolute nothing, as any thing whatever, that has actual existence. For *possible* existence is really SOMETHING, as well as that, which is *actual*. Though it is universally the case, that all *actual* existence is the same as that, which is *possible*; yet it is not universally the case, in the mutable system, that all *possible* existence is the same as that, which is *actual*. In the mutable system, therefore, *possible existence* is more extensive than *actual*.... Hence it is, that there are some real objects of sensation, which have a perfect agreement with possible existence, but yet do not perfectly agree with what actually exists. The object of every true sensation is something real, and is something perfectly distinct from the sensation itself; but whether this object is exactly the *same*, as what actually exists, or whether it is, in some respect, *different*, is a question, which is not to be determined by sensation, but by a perfectly distinct kind of perception.... With regard to the real object of every true sensation, two things are to be taken into view; first, the DIFFERENCE of the object from *nothing*; and secondly, its AGREEMENT with *something*. These two things are perfectly distinct, one from the other. The first is the proper object of sensation; and the second, of belief. Whenever we have a true sensation, it is certain, that the object of it, in respect to its *difference* from *nothing*, really

is exactly what it *appears* to be ; it is also certain, in general, that it has a perfect *agreement* with *something*. It does not, however, from this, universally follow, that it perfectly agrees with any thing, that *actually exists*.

But if there are some instances, in which the real object of sensation is different from what actually exists ; then how are we informed of the real certainty of there being any actual external existence ? How are we informed, for instance, of the real certainty of there being any such things, *in actual existence*, as the Sun, the Moon, the Earth, the ocean, rivers, mountains, trees, houses, animal bodies, &c. ? We answer : That we have infallible information, respecting the real certainty of the actual existence of these things, not by *mere sensation alone*, but by a perfectly different kind of perception, which we call *knowledge*. If you inquire, How we obtain this knowledge ? the answer is, That the real object of it, consisting in AGREEMENT, is actually presented to our view, and being thus presented, we must unavoidably perceive it. And we never can, by the most strenuous efforts, which we can possibly make, acquire any *knowledge* on the negative side of the question ; viz. That there is not, in actual existence, any real external system of matter and motion. The reason is, because, on the negative side, there is no certainty ; and without certainty, knowledge can never exist. All the real evidence, therefore, which there is, in this case, is on the affirmative side.... And this kind of evidence is the foundation of one species of perception, which is intirely distinct from sensation. And it is by this, that we are infallibly informed of the certainty of the *actual existence* of an external material system. For it does not follow, because we are

not informed of this, by mere sensation alone, that, therefore, we have no certain information; because there is, as we have just been observing, another intirely distinct kind of perception, by which this information is irresistibly presented to the mind.

Particular sensations are continually changing, in respect to their peculiar forms and degrees; but the other kind of perception, which we have mentioned, viz. that general knowledge which has the certainty of the actual existence of the material system for its object, admits of no variation. There is a perfect distinction between *matter itself*, and the *truth* or *certainty*, which relates to its actual existence. It is the *former*, which consists in absolute DIFFERENCE of various forms and degrees, that constitutes the proper object of *sensation*; but it is the *latter*, which consists in simple AGREEMENT, or indivisible unity, that constitutes the proper object of *knowledge*. These two kinds of perception, viz. sensation and knowledge, though they are intirely distinct, on account of the perfect distinction of their respective objects, yet are perfectly consistent with each other. Therefore, a sensation of the *difference* of matter from nothing, and a knowledge of its *agreement* with actual existence, may both be present at once. If it should be inquired, What we must do, in order to obtain the evidence of that agreement, in which consists the real truth, that relates to the actual existence of an external material system? The direct answer will be, That we have nothing to do, for this purpose. Because, whatever our *particular sensations* may be, the evidence of the *general truth*, consisting in the AGREEMENT of that external system, which is the object of sensation, with actual existence, does, independent

of our will, and without any effort of ours, irresistibly present itself to our view. And therefore, if we could, by doing violence to our nature, bring ourselves, in any measure, to entertain a doubt of the affirmative side of the question ; yet we cannot, by any course of persevering exertions, the most violent that can possibly be made, ever obtain such evidence, on the negative side, as to produce a conviction of *certainty*. The reason of this has been already assigned ; viz. because all real certainty, in this case, is on the *affirmative* side ; and therefore, utterly fruitless and vain are all attempts to find it on the *negative*. For though it is true, that we sometimes have sensations, the real objects of which, though they have a perfect agreement with *possible* existence, do not, however, agree, in every respect with any thing, that *actually* exists ; yet this does not, in the least degree, interfere with, nor invalidate, the evidence of the real *certainty* or *truth*, which relates to the *actual existence* of an external system of matter and motion. With regard to particular objects, though our sensations may vary ; yet this does not effect our general belief, respecting the certainty of their actual existence. An inflexible rod or staff, for instance, will, at one time, appear to be straight, and at another time, appear to be crooked. We shall, notwithstanding this, however, equally *believe*, in general, that it *actually exists*, in one case, as well as the other.

The observations, that have been made, for the purpose of illustrating the perfect correspondence of all true sensations to their respective objects, and of showing the real distinction between the sensations and the objects, to which they respectively relate, will, if they are duly considered, and the proper design of them is rightly under-

stood, be found to be of serious importance, and of very extensive application. We are surrounded by a multiplicity of objects, which belong to the external system; and by a course of diversified motions, transferred from them to the sensory, and from that, to the want of perception, a continual series of sensations are produced. Every true sensation has a perfect correspondence to some real difference between possible existence and nothing. Every sensation, thus corresponding to any real difference, whether the difference is, or is not, in every respect, coincident with actual existence, is what we call a true sensation; because it perfectly corresponds to a *real object*. What this real object is, whether it is, or is not, *in all respects*, the same as any thing that actually exists, we are not informed by sensation; but we receive our intelligence, relative to this, intirely from another source; viz. from that kind of perception, which has agreement for its object. This last kind of perception is, as we have already observed, intirely distinct from sensation, and is, in general, called *belief*; and when it is perfect in degree, it is then denominated *knowledge*. External surrounding objects produce sensations; but it is the property, not of external objects, but of *propositions*, to produce belief and knowledge. External objects are natually calculated to produce certain peculiar sensations; and these will be varied in exact proportion to the variation of their respective objects; supposing the organs of sense to continue the same. Hence external objects will produce different sensations, according as the objects themselves are rough or smooth, hard or soft, great or small, in motion or at rest, near or remote, &c. and according as they are perceived by the direct, refracted, or reflected rays of light, &c.

That is, the numberless diversified *effects* will be exactly proportional to their external diversified *causes*. And it may also be observed, that the same external objects, in the same relative situation, will produce similar sensations, in relation to any number of distinct individual minds. And here it will be remembered, That sensation is not immediately produced by external objects, considered absolutely in themselves; but the immediate or proximate cause of sensation consists, not in matter itself, nor in matter and motion combined, but in motion alone; which, having been progressively transferred from one part of matter to another, till it has been actually communicated to that peculiar organized system, called the sensorium or sensory; and then, as the last, or final result, of the whole process, has been immediately transmitted from that to nothing but the want of perception. And here it is, that motion, being thus transmitted, is brought to the last stage of its existence: And, having been thus brought, by a series of successive gradations, to its final state, it is the immediate cause of positive perception, which having once produced, it then immediately expires. After one motion has expired, then another succeeds. And thus the amazing process is continued with perfect regularity, till the peculiar system of organized matter, from which the several motions, at the end of their course, in the external system, have been successively transmitted to nothing but the want of perception, is injured or destroyed. Whenever, therefore, we say, That external objects produce sensation, it is always to be understood, that motion, in the manner, that has now been explained, is the proximate cause. And the observation, that has been so often repeated, cannot easily be

forgotten ; That by the particular *cause* of any *effect* is uniformly meant the *antecedent*, according to which the Deity himself, by the exertion of his own power, produces a correspondent *consequence*. Most solemn, then, at all times, is our situation, when in the system of mind and matter, we every moment feel within, and see without, on every side, the immediate effects of divine power. And now, if any proper attention has been paid to the observations, which have been made, we cannot be misunderstood, when, in order to conform, as much as possible, to the common use of language, we say, That certain causes produce correspondent effects ; and, particularly, That *motion*, in the manner, which has been already explained, produces sensation.

CHAPTER VII.

ON SENSIBLE IDEAS ; OR THOSE, WHICH RESEMBLE SENSATIONS.

HAVING taken a general view of sensation, we shall now proceed to consider another kind of perception, consisting in sensible ideas. The distinction between these two classes of perception is this : The former has, for its object, *absolute* difference ; or the difference between the whole of any thing and nothing ; but the object of the latter is *relative* difference ; or that which subsists between the whole and a part. And, this being the case, sensations and sensible ideas are produced in a very different manner. For the first are produced by *absolute*, but the last, by *relative* quantities. By an absolute quan-

tity is meant the whole of any thing, in a state of difference from nothing; and, by a relative quantity, is to be understood a part, in a state of separation from the whole. It is the property of *absolute* quantities to produce *sensations*; and of *relative*, to produce *sensible ideas*. And there are two kinds of relative quantities; viz. *natural* and *artificial*. Those of the latter kind are, by far, the most common, and convenient for the purpose of producing that class of ideas, which is now to be the subject of consideration. Those artificial or arbitrary relative quantities consist in that part of LANGUAGE, which contains the NAMES of sensible objects. Thus, the words, *Sun, Moon, stars, Earth, water, mountain, tree, man, &c.* are fitted to produce sensible ideas, because they have been voluntarily made to sustain the relation of a *part* to the *whole*. For, since, by the voluntary act of beings, who are endowed with the faculty of speech, they sustain such a relation, they are properly calculated to produce an idea of the *difference* between the whole and a part.... And this difference is, as we have said, the real object of a sensible idea. It must not, therefore, be supposed, that the *mind*, in some way or other, produces sensible ideas, and then, that *certain names* are given to those ideas; for it is by the names, that are given to sensible objects, that the ideas themselves are produced, and presented to the mind. It has been observed, That external objects are naturally calculated to produce certain peculiar sensations; and that the sensations will be varied in exact proportion to the variation of their respective objects. The case, however, with respect to the production of sensible ideas, is intirely different. Glass, for instance, is an external object, which, when it is actually presented to the view of

any one person, will produce a certain sensation. And if it is presented to the view of any number of persons, it will produce similar sensations, in the minds of the various individuals, to whom it is presented. Again; gold is an external object, which is naturally fitted to produce a sensation, different from that, which glass is calculated to produce. Gold, however, will produce similar sensations in the minds of any number of individuals, to whose immediate view it is actually subjected. And it will make no alteration in the state of the case, whether those individuals are united together, in one society, and all speak the same language; or whether they are separated from each other, by the broadest climates, or the most extensive oceans, and make use of languages, intirely different. But though external objects themselves, such as glass and gold, for instance, are naturally calculated to produce correspondent sensations; yet the WORD, *glass*, or *gold*, is not naturally fitted to produce any sensible idea. The WORD, *gold*, is no more *naturally* fitted to produce an idea of that peculiar kind of metal, which is called by that name, than it is to produce an idea of glass, or wood, or stone, or iron, &c. Let the word, gold, be seen, or heard, by any number of persons, of whose common language it constitutes a part, and it will excite, in their minds, similar ideas, of an external object of a peculiar kind. But let this *same word* be exhibited, either in a written or vocal form, to other persons, of a different language, and it will excite a different idea, or no idea at all, just according as it has, or has not, been admitted into the language, which they use.

Hence it is evident: That sensations and sensible ideas are produced, in a manner, very different from each other, and by very different causes. Though there seems, at first view, to be something intirely arbitrary, with respect to the production of sensible ideas; yet we ought not to conclude, that this is really the case, till the subject has been duly examined. And in order to prevent any conclusion of this kind, let the general principle, That the Supreme Universal Agent performs all his operations with the greatest regularity and most perfect order, always be kept in view.

External objects are, as we have said, naturally calculated to produce correspondent sensations. But *words* will never produce *ideas*, but only in consequence of their having been *previously prepared* for that purpose, by being made to sustain the relation of a *part* to the *whole*.... Words, therefore, in order that they may be fitted to excite sensible ideas, must first be connected with the sensible objects, the ideas of which they are designed to produce. Let *any word* be connected with *any external object*; that is, let a *name* be given to any *thing* whatever; and this will lay a foundation for the *name* alone to produce an *idea* of the *object*, when the object itself is absent. Let the word, *gold*, for instance, be so connected with a peculiar kind of metal, that the *word*, and the *thing*, with which the word is connected, may both conspire to produce one compound sensation; and then, after this has been done, the *name*, or the *word*, *gold*, taken separately by itself, will produce an idea of the *THING*, with which it has been connected. When a name has been given to any particular object of sensation; then the *name*, and the *object*, both taken together, is what we call

the *whole* ; and the *name*, taken separately by itself, is a *part* of the whole ; in this case, therefore, the name has the relation of a part to the whole. Hence it is, that a word, which has been constituted as the name of any sensible object, will produce an idea of the *difference* between the whole and a part ; which DIFFERENCE is the very same as the OBJECT ITSELF. For it is worthy of special observation, That every whole is composed of one *part*, and the *difference* between that *one part* and the *whole*. This may be illustrated by numbers.

Let there be any whole number, 7, for instance..... Then the number, 7, is composed of any one part of 7, and the difference between that part and the whole. If we take 2 for one part ; then the difference between that one part and the whole will be 5 ; but the sum of 2 and 5 is 7. If we take 4 for one part ; then the difference will be 3 ; but the sum of 4 and 3 is 7 ; and so of the rest. Or, if we take any other number whatever, 15 for instance, we shall find the whole to be composed of any one part, and the difference between that part and the whole. If we assume 6, as one part ; then the difference will be 9 ; but the sum of 6 and 9 is 15. If one part is 8 ; then the difference will be 7 ; but the sum of 8 and 7 is 15. If one part is 11 ; then the difference will be 4 ; but 11 and 4 is 15, &c. And this will universally apply, in every other case, as well as that, which relates to numbers. For let m be any one whole whatever ; let n be any one part of m ; and let the *difference* between m and n be d . Then it is universally the case, that m is composed of n and d ; that is, $m=n+d$ For since, by the statement, we have $m-n=d$; therefore, it necessarily follows : That, $m=n+d$.

It is on this universal principle, that any particular *word*, after it has been constituted as the *name* of any sensible object, will produce an idea of the object, of which the word itself is the constituted name. For though any particular word, considered absolutely in itself, is not calculated to produce any idea; yet, when it has been actually constituted, as the name of any sensible object; it then assumes the relation of a part to the whole. Consequently, the word, having this relation, is fitted, or prepared, to produce an idea of the *difference* between the whole and a part.

In order to illustrate the theory of sensible ideas, let us suppose, that you have a sensation of some particular object, and that you constitute some *word*, for instance, the word, *tree*, as the name of the object, that excites the sensation in your mind. This being done, there will be a foundation for the *name alone*, when it is *separated* from the *complex whole*, of which it constitutes a *part*, to produce a sensible idea of the object, to which it relates. The reason is, because it is the nature of a *part*, in its state of *separation* from the *whole*, to imply the *difference* between the whole and the separate part. And, that we may show the universal principle, according to which, all sensible ideas are produced, let d be any sensible object: and let n be any *word*, which has been adopted as the *name* of the object. Then the expression for the name, combined with the object, will be $n+d$. Let the word, n , after having been thus combined with the object, d , be separated from the complex whole ($n+d$) and then, in this separate state, being actually presented, in a written or vocal form, it will excite an idea of the object, with which it has been combined. For n , in its

state of separation, will be expressed by $n+d-n$. But since $n+d-n=d$; therefore, the word, n , in its state of separation from the complex whole ($n+d$) will produce an idea of the object, d ; because n itself, in this separate state, is equal to d . Or, if any other word, r , for instance, instead of n , should be combined with d (thus; $r+d$) and then separated from the complex whole ($r+d$) it will produce the same effect as before..... Because the expression for r , in its state of separation, will be $r+d-r$. But there is no difference between $n+d-n$, and $r+d-r$. Hence it is evident, that any word may be made to produce an idea, corresponding to any sensible object, with which the word itself has been actually combined. This is the source, from which imagination is to derive that endless variety of ideas, with which it may be enriched. And here it may be observed, that sensations and sensible ideas are *inversely* as each other; that is, the greater the one, the less the other, and vice versa. Hence it is, that our sensible ideas, in *dreams*, are often much more vivid, than what they are in our waking hours. Every sensible idea, as we have said, has the difference between any complex whole, and one part of the whole, for its real object. And the sensible idea is produced by one part, when it operates alone, in a state of separation from the whole. The complex whole, by one *part* of which, any sensible idea is produced, is of two kinds; viz. natural, and artificial.

It has been shown, that any artificial whole is formed by the combination of any word, whatever it may be, with any sensible object. It is by such a combination, that any word is prepared to produce a sensible idea, correspondent to the object, of which the word is the con-

stituted name. Words, after having become the established names of particular things, will produce ideas, on all occasions, whether they are externally presented to the eye or the ear ; or whether they are secretly, and almost imperceptibly, used in the exercise of retired and silent meditation.

A very few brief remarks will now be made, with respect to the *natural* whole and its parts, considered as relating to the production of perception. By a natural whole is meant that, the parts of which are naturally connected or combined. Thus ; smoke and fire may be considered as being the constituent parts of a natural whole. When both parts operate together ; then nothing but sensation will be produced ; but when *one part*, in a state of separation from the whole, operates alone, it will produce an *idea* of the *other*. And hence it is, that *smoke*, operating alone, will produce an idea of fire, according to the very same principle, that any particular *word* will produce an idea of the object, whatever it may be, of which the word has been made the established name. There are cases, too many to be enumerated, in which, things, either natural or artificial, are so related to each other, as that the combined parts may be considered as constituting a complex whole. And in cases of this kind, one part, when it presents itself, in a state of separation from the whole, will produce an idea of the *difference* between the whole and a part. But it is unnecessary to multiply examples ; since the remarks, that have already been made, are sufficient for the proof and illustration of the universal principle, That all sensible ideas are produced by one part, operating alone, in a state of separation from the complex whole, to which it has a peculiar relation. Hence it

is evident, that there is a perfect distinction between sensation and a sensible idea. The former is a perception, which corresponds to the absolute difference between the whole of any sensible object and nothing ; but the latter is a perception, corresponding to the difference between the whole of a sensible object and a separate part. Though a sensible idea resembles a sensation, and both of them have real *difference* for their respective objects ; yet the latter is produced in a very different way, and according to a different principle, from the former.

It must be kept in view, that we have been treating on true perception ; viz. that which perfectly corresponds to some *real* object ; whether the object is, or is not, any thing, which is coincident with what *actually* exists. For it must be remembered, that it is POSSIBLE EXISTENCE, whether it does, or does not, exactly coincide with *actual existence*, which is the *real object* of every true sensation and of every true sensible idea. The whole system of true sensations and sensible ideas would be contracted within very narrow limits, if it was intirely confined to objects, which are, in *all respects*, exactly coincident with *actual existence*. All true sensations and sensible ideas perfectly correspond to REAL OBJECTS ; but in order to determine how far these objects are coincident with those, that *actually exist*, we must have recourse, not to any sensation, nor sensible idea, but to another class of perceptions of an intirely different kind, with which we are furnished for that purpose.

From what has been observed, in the preceding chapter, it is evident, that neither sensations nor sensible ideas are immediately produced by the mind itself ; but they are all produced by particular causes, perfectly distinct

from the mind. Or, more strictly speaking, there are particular antecedents, perfectly distinct from the mind, according to which the Deity, by the exertion of his own power, produces those particular effects, of which the mind is conscious, when it has sensations and sensible ideas for its immediate attendants. When any perception is produced, the mind is under the unavoidable necessity of receiving it, just according as it is presented. Amidst all the endless variety of changes, both in the external and internal system, the mind is intirely passive, except in one special case, the peculiar nature, and infinite importance of which, will be particularly stated, and distinctly explained, when we come to treat on liberty and moral agency.

We have now taken a general view of DIFFERENTIAL PERCEPTION, consisting in *sensations* and *sensible ideas*, and have found, that all true perceptions of this kind perfectly correspond to real objects ; which objects are perfectly distinct from the mind, and also from the perceptions themselves. For the object of every true sensation consists in the difference between something and nothing ; and that of every true sensible idea, in the difference between the whole and a part. And since those differences are endless, in number and variety, there is a foundation for the mind to be supplied with perceptions of this kind, as long as it exists ; that is, through a whole eternity. Having considered the nature of *differential* perception, or that, the real object of which is DIFFERENCE, we shall now proceed to the consideration of an intirely distinct kind, viz. that which is *intellectual*, and which has AGREEMENT for its real object. This kind of perception consists of two classes ; one of which includes *abstract ideas*, and the other, *belief*.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON ABSTRACT OR GENERAL IDEAS.

THERE are, as we have said, two distinct kinds of intellectual perception ; one of which consists in *abstract ideas*, and the other, in *belief*. The former is produced by *substitution*, and the latter, by *propositions*. Belief, when it is imperfect, is called *doubt* ; and according as it rises from a lower to a higher degree, it is called *probability*, till it becomes perfect, and then it is denominated *knowledge*. But when, on the contrary, it falls from a higher to a lower degree, it is then called *improbability*, or *suspense*. But before we take a particular view of the nature of belief, we shall take, what are called general or abstract ideas, as a subject of consideration ; since this kind of intellectual perception naturally comes first in order.

We have already taken a view of sensation and sensible ideas, and have shown, that all that kind of perception has a real object, consisting in *difference* ; that is, in the difference resulting from the separation of nothing from the whole ; or in the difference resulting from the separation of a part from the whole. And since those differences are infinitely extensive and various, therefore there is a foundation for the mind to be furnished with an inexhaustible store of real objects, which are calculated to produce that kind of perception, which we have denominated *differential*, to distinguish it from that of the *intellectual* kind. We are now led, by the nature of the subject, to treat on that, which corresponds to agreement ; viz. that

kind of agreement, which words or things, in consequence of SUBSTITUTION, have with the real objects, to which they respectively relate. For it is intirely by SUBSTITUTION, that the mind is furnished with all its endless variety of abstract or general ideas. It is in this way only, that it can hold an intercourse, and carry on a correspondence with the intellectual system. Every abstract, or general idea has a *real object*; consisting in that AGREEMENT, or IDENTITY, which every SUBSTITUTE actually has with that, whatever it is, to which it has a special relation; for it is the universal nature of every *substitute* to be the *same* as the *object* of *substitution*. Thus the *word*, "Sun," being substituted for that vast globe, which is the centre of our planetary system, has a real agreement with, and is really the same as, that amazing mass of matter, which has a commanding influence over a number of revolving worlds, of which the earth, on which we dwell, is one. The *word*, "animal," being substituted for any thing, which has the properties of life, sense, and spontaneous motion, is really the *same* as that, whatever it is, to which those properties belong. The *word*, "mind," or "soul," being substituted for that immaterial substance, which has the peculiar property of being immediately attended with a continual series of pleasing or painful perceptions, is really the very same, as that immortal principle, which is capable of enjoying or enduring, and must unavoidably enjoy or endure, perfect happiness or misery, through endless duration. The WORD, "JEHOVAH," being substituted for that glorious Being, whose peculiar property it is to be possessed of universal, immutable, and eternal perfection, is, in reality, the *very same* as that ever adorable Object, for which the word is substituted. Hence we

may see the way, which, on serious reflection, is wonderful beyond all conception, whereby the mind can be most richly furnished with an endless variety of intellectual ideas; ideas having a direct relation, and a perfect correspondence, to inexpressibly important, interesting, and solemn realities. We may see what a boundless store of provision the beneficent Parent of the universe has in reserve, for the life, the food, and nourishment, of that amazing percipient principle, the soul, which is to exist for ever. Which provision he will freely deal out, with a most liberal hand, in large and increasing measures, according to the utmost extent of the finite, yet ever growing capacity of every one, who will be finally admitted to dwell in his happifying presence. And this he will continue to do, without any interruption or intermission, as long as the life of the soul, or his own immortality endures. It is, therefore, a consideration, that may well excite astonishment, that a *word*, composed only of a few small characters, or letters, can, by substitution, be so changed, as to have a real agreement with, that is, be really the same as, something which is, in reality, infinitely different from the word, simply considered in itself, as being nothing but a *word*. Thus; the word, "eternity," considered merely as a sensible object, or as being nothing but a *word*, consisting of a certain number of marks of a particular form, is not any thing, that is worthy of any special regard. But how inconceivably important, interesting, and solemn it is, when, by substitution, it becomes, in reality, the same as that *endless series of times*, which are successively flowing, and will for ever continue to flow, from the future to the present, and from the present to the past!.....**THAT ENDLESS SERIES OF TIMES,**

through which, that *immaterial, immortal* PRINCIPLE, which now actuates a dying body, must pass ; and through the whole, as it is continually advancing forward, from stage to stage, must enjoy unspeakable happiness, or suffer unutterable wo !

We have observed, That *words* may be fitted to produce sensible ideas. This is done by constituting them a *part* of some complex whole ; that is, a whole, the constituent parts of which are the *word* and the *sensible object*, of which the word is designed to produce an idea. The word, having been first combined with the object, will then, when it comes to operate alone, in a state of separation from the whole, of which it has formed a constituent part, produce an idea of the sensible object, with which it has been previously combined. But the way, in which words are prepared to produce intellectual ideas, is intirely different. For, in this case, no regard is paid to the *appearances*, which external objects present to the senses. And words are not combined with any sensible objects so as to compose a part of any complex whole ; but they are, by SUBSTITUTION, made to be the very same, as the *things themselves*, the ideas of which they are prepared to produce. The word is substituted for the very thing itself, considered as being what it really is, according to its own nature, and peculiar properties, without any regard to *external appearances*. The word, being thus substituted, is the very same as the thing, for which it is substituted ; and consequently the real AGREEMENT of the *word* with the *thing itself* is the real object of the intellectual idea. For when any word is substituted for any real thing, whatever, whether small or great, material or immaterial, finite or infinite, it is then (not

indeed considered in itself, as being nothing but a *word*, but) considered in character of a *substitute*, completely invested with all the properties of the very thing itself, for which it is substituted. And thus it is prepared to produce an idea of its own agreement with the thing, with which it has, by substitution, a perfect union or coincidence. Thus we may see, whence it is, that *words*, as they relate to intellectual objects, derive all their force, their value and importance. Any word, considered in character of a *SUBSTITUTE*, is, without any distinction, in every respect, perfectly the same as the very thing itself, which is the object of substitution; and therefore it will produce an idea of its connexion with the object; because it has the very same connexion with the object, as the object has with itself. And this connexion universally consists in unity or 1.

From what has been said, it is evident, that there are two ways, in which words will produce ideas. One is by *separation*; according to what has been explained, in the preceding chapter; and the other is by *connexion*..... And as the respective objects of these two kinds of ideas are perfectly distinct (the one consisting in *difference*, and the other, in *agreement*) so there is a correspondent distinction between the ideas themselves. Any word, which is substituted for an intellectual object, has two perfectly distinct natures. Thus, the *word*, "Jehovah," considered absolutely in itself, as being nothing but a *mere word*, is only a sensible object, consisting of a number of *marks*, or *letters*, of a particular form; but this *same word*, being *SUBSTITUTED* for the Omnipotent Creator of the universe, has the very *same nature*, and is invested with all the properties, of an immutable, and

eternal Being of infinite perfection. The NAME of the Living God is the *very same* as the Living God himself.

“JEHOVAH ! 'tis a glorious word !

“ O may it dwell on every tongue !”

And may it always be regarded with the greatest reverential fear, and the most profound adoration. “Thou shalt not take the NAME of the Lord thy God in vain : for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.” (Exod. xx. 7.) “Father, glorify thy Name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” (John xii. 28.) “Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name ? for thou only art Holy.” (Rev. xv. 4.) “If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law, that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD ; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful.” (Deut. xxviii. 58.) “Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious Name.” (1 Chron. xxxix. 13.) “Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever : and blessed be thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.” (Neh. ix. 5.) “Let them praise the Name of the Lord : for his Name alone is excellent ; his glory is above the earth and heaven.” (Psal. cxlv. 13.) “Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not : Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy NAME is from everlasting.” (Isa. lxiii. 16.)

It is by SUBSTITUTION, as we have said, and by that alone, that we are enabled to carry on a correspondence with the intellectual world ; for, without *substitution*,

our ideas would never have extended beyond *sensible objects*. When any thing, whether it is a *word*, or whatever it may be, is substituted for any object, it is then so *united*, as to be the *very same* with the object itself. It was, therefore, by SUBSTITUTION, that the great Redeemer of mankind, the glorious Mediator between God and man, had really a Divine as well as a human nature. Being substituted for the Second of the Three adorable Subsistences, which are essential to the blessed nature of the Eternal Jehovah, he is, by way of eminence, called "THE WORD," being a Substitute above all other substitutes; a Word above all other words. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other NAME under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John i. 1.)

It belongs to a substitute, as we have already observed, to have *two perfectly distinct natures*; one is the *very same* as that of the *object*, to which it is united by substitution; and the other is its *own proper nature*, considered as being nothing but what it is in itself. There is something very wonderful in the consideration, that any word, or indeed any sensible object, will, by substitution, become perfectly coincident with the very thing itself, for which it is substituted. Thus, the word "man," being substituted for a human being, is the very same as the *being itself*; that is, it is the very same as a real being, possessing the nature and all the properties of any one, that has life, sense, spontaneous motion, and reason. The word "God," being substituted for the great First Cause, the Omnipotent Creator, and Universal Preserver

of all things, is the *very same* as a Being of absolute, infinite, and immutable perfection. *The man*, Jesus Christ, being substituted for the Second of the Three wonderful and amazing Subsistences, essentially belonging to the nature of the Deity, is the very same as that glorious and adorable Subsistence, denominated "the Son," in distinction from the Father and Holy Spirit; and therefore, has really a Divine, as well as a human nature, and is the only proper object of all practical faith. Hence we may see the infinite importance of the doctrine of substitution; for, without this, the soul would be intirely confined to perceptions, relating only to objects of sense. But by substitution, the objects, that belong to the immense system of intellectual realities, not only those, that have a relation to the present, but likewise those, that relate to endless futurity, present themselves to our astonished view. For, it is by substitution, and by that alone, that we become conversant with intellectual objects; such as God and ourselves; number, distance, time and place; immensity and eternity; power and agency; possibility, necessity, and contingency; sin and holiness; truth and falsehood; and the interminable duration of the soul's conscious identity and real existence, in perfect happiness or misery, after its having passed through its present introductory state.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE NATURE OF BELIEF, AND IT VARIOUS OBJECTS.

HAVING taken a view of sensible ideas, and also of that class of the intellectual kind, which is produced by substitution, we shall now proceed to the consideration of another, and a very distinct kind of perception; viz. that, which, when it is considered in a general view, is called *belief*. This, according to the degree of it, as being perfect, or imperfect, is denominated *knowledge*, or *doubt*. And it is produced, not by any single word, or phrase, but by a number of words, so connected together, as to form a sentence, containing an affirmation; which affirmation is commonly called a *proposition*. It is the nature of a proposition to have, not only an agreement with itself, but also an agreement with its being true, or with its not being true. This special agreement is called *truth*; and, for the sake of distinction, may be denominated affirmative, or negative.

There are three particular cases, in which a proposition will produce *belief*. For, sometimes there will be a *perfect belief* of the proposition's being true. This, however, is never the case, but only when the proposition itself is really true. And sometimes there will be a *perfect belief* of the proposition's not being true. But this is never the case, but only when the proposition itself is not true. The belief, in each of these cases, is what we denominate *knowledge*. In the first case, it is affirmative, and in the other, it is negative. Hence it follows, that knowledge, whether it is affirmative or nega-

tive, always has real certainty for its correspondent object. For it is inconsistent with the nature of any proposition, at the time when it is not true, to produce a perfect belief of its being true; and it is equally inconsistent, that any proposition should, at the time, when it is true, produce a perfect belief of its not being true..... Again; it is sometimes the case, that there will be an imperfect belief of a proposition's being true; and, at the same time, an imperfect belief of its not being true. In this case, the belief, on one side, will always be *inverse-ly*, as it is on the other. That is, the greater the degree of belief is, on the affirmative side, the less will it be on the negative; and vice versa. In this case, the belief, on each side, being imperfect, is called *doubt*. And not only knowledge, but also doubt (unless it consists in the belief of falsehood, or in false belief) always corresponds to the *reality* of things.

When a proposition produces that kind of perception, which we here call *doubt*, consisting in an imperfect belief on each side, it is, in this case, certain, in general, that the belief, on the affirmative side, does, according to the degree of it, correspond to the real agreement of *some* proposition with its being true. It is also certain, in general, that the belief, on the negative side, does, according to the degree of it, correspond to the real agreement of *some* proposition with its not being true. In this case, there are two distinct agreements, with relation to each of which, there is an imperfect belief. That is, there is a real agreement of *some* proposition with its being true, and a real agreement of *some* proposition with its not being true; and therefore, the belief, on each side, corresponds, according to the *degree* of it, to a real ob-

ject. But though it is certain, in general, that one or the other of those two agreements does really belong to that particular proposition, which produces the belief; yet, since the belief itself is, on each side, imperfect, the mind is, therefore, left in a state of uncertainty, respecting *which* of the two *agreements* it is, whether it is the *affirmative* or the *negative*, that actually belongs to the given proposition. Hence it is evident, that *doubt* or *uncertainty* universally consists in that imperfect perception, which peculiarly relates to a finite mind. And therefore, there is not any uncertainty in the reality of things, considered in distinction from imperfect perception..... Consequently, no uncertainty can ever attend the Omniscient Mind of that infinite Being, who always has an absolutely perfect, and completely comprehensive view of all, which is contained in immensity and eternity. Such is the nature of a proposition, that, whenever it produces only an imperfect belief, on one side, it always will, at the same time, produce an imperfect belief, on the opposite side. And hence it is, that *doubt* universally implies two distinct perceptions; one of which has affirmative, and the other, negative, agreement for its real object..... And these two perceptions, in respect to their degree, are always, as we have said, inversely, one as the other. But with respect to *knowledge* the case is different. For, in this case, the whole belief is all on one side; the belief, therefore, is absolutely and completely perfect. And consequently, the mind is furnished with an infallible indication of the real state of the proposition, to which the belief relates.

In the AGREEMENT of any proposition with its being true, or with its not being true consists ACTUAL TRUTH.

And the CONSISTENCY of any proposition with its being true, or with its not being true, constitutes POTENTIAL TRUTH, or POSSIBILITY. It is often the case, that a proposition has a *consistency*, without an actual *agreement*, with its being true ; or that it has a *consistency*, without an actual *agreement*, with its not being true. And therefore, *possibility* is more extensive than *actual truth*. It never is the case, that there is actual truth, but only on one side, that is, on the affirmative or the negative ; but it is frequently the case, that, in respect to future time, there is a possibility on each side. And whenever this is the case, one or the other of the two possibilities is now different from what it will be, when the future time, to which it now relates, comes to be actually present. *That* one of the two possibilities, which is thus different, is what we denominate CONTINGENCE. It is universally the case, that, as far as contingency extends, there is, in the hand of the Deity, a balance of power. And this balance is the whole foundation of all liberty, and moral agency. Whenever possibility is all on one side, it is then called NECESSITY. Contingence and necessity are inconsistent with each other, and therefore, they never both exist at the same time ; but they exist by succession. And, according to the universal order of things, contingency, as far as it has any existence, always *precedes* necessity ; and by the removal of contingency, necessity is introduced. Contingence, from the very nature of it, relates to future time only, and not to the present nor the past. Therefore, whenever that future time, to which any contingency now relates, becomes actually present ; then the contingency will be removed ; and the removal of contingency will be attended with the introduction of neces-

sity. This order of things can never be reversed. All the contingency, that there is now, always has been. This is evident; because the Deity was originally invested with all the power, that he does now, or ever will possess. But the case, with regard to necessity is very different. For it is not the case, that all necessity is of an original nature. Because there are, with respect to the mutable system, many instances, in which, at some particular time, there has, by the removal of original contingency, been the actual introduction of that necessity, which did not belong to the original state of things. And as this *has been* the case, in time past, so it *will be* in time to come. All necessity, both that, which is of an original nature, and that, which, at any particular time, has, by the removal of contingency, been actually introduced, implies certainty. And not only so, but *certainty* is likewise universally implied in *contingence*, as far as contingency itself actually extends. Therefore, since every thing, which is past, present, or future, is either necessary or contingent, there is a real CERTAINTY, with regard to every thing without exception. Consequently; in the all-comprehending Mind of the Deity, there always has been, is now, and for ever will be, a most perfect knowledge of all things in the universal system, considered as being every way extended, through eternity past; through immensity present; and through endless duration to come.

We have now taken a view of the various real objects of that kind of perception, which is called *belief*; and have found those objects to consist in actual truth, possibility, necessity, and contingency. And to those, that have already been enumerated, may be added *conditional truth*; the nature of which has (in part 1, chap. 5) been

particularly explained. But of all kinds of belief, that which is *practical*, is of the most interesting nature. This universally has the possibility of being eternally happy for its direct and immediate object; which is, therefore, of all others, the most important; because it is the only Mediator between God and man; and, therefore, without this, there is no way whatever of having any access to the Deity. Hence we may see the infinite excellence and value of this possibility; for it is absolutely essential to the existence, the nature, and perfections of the adorable Jehovah; it is essential to the life and happiness of the finite mind; and it is that, without which, the soul must unavoidably be reduced to a state, infinitely worse than that of nonexistence. This possibility, therefore, is supremely worthy of the same regard, as the ever living God; because, as we have said, it is absolutely essential to his nature. *This one absolute present Possibility* of being eternally happy is the only “way, the truth, and the life;” and it is that, “without which we can do nothing.” (John xiv. 6. xv. 5.) It is therefore, the grand foundation of the whole economy of redemption, and, consequently, it is the glorious and adorable Object of all practical faith.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE PERCEPTION OF FALSEHOOD, AND FALSE PERCEPTION.

HAVING taken a general view of true perception, in its various kinds; the manner, in which it is produced; and the objects, to which it relates; we shall now proceed

to make some observations on the perception of falsehood, and false perception; between which there is a real distinction, that must always be kept in view. And here, in order to discuss this subject with perspicuity and precision, it will be necessary to adopt certain appropriate terms, which, whenever they are introduced, will always be used in the same definite, unequivocal sense. The peculiar terms, which we shall have frequent occasion to use, are the following: viz. veracity, falsehood, purity, impurity, equity, perversity and iniquity.

1. *Veracity* consists in true evidence; or that *appearance*, which corresponds to the *reality* of things. 2. *Falsehood* consists in that *appearance*, which has no agreement with any *real object*. 3. *Purity* is veracity alone, without any mixture of falsehood. 4. Veracity, combined with falsehood, constitutes *impurity*. 5. In any *perception*, whatever it may be, which agrees, not only with *appearance*, but also, with the *reality* of things, consists what we call *equity*. 6. *Perversity*, according as we use the term, is the same as the perception of falsehood; or that perception, which has an agreement with *appearance* only, without any reality. 7. *Iniquity* is any perception, *in addition to perversity*, and is that, which does not agree with any *real object*, nor even with any *appearance*; and this is the very same as what we otherwise call *false perception*. There is one thing, perfectly distinct from any of those, that have now been enumerated; and which does not consist in any object of perception; nor in perception itself; nor in volition; but it universally consists in the *agreement* of the finite mind with the prohibited term of the Deity's twofold power. This is what we call *SIN*; and which will be particularly introduced to

view, when we come to treat on moral agency. The ultimate or final consequence of *sin* is *negative* perception, or *misery*; and sin, in its last result, never eventuates in any other consequence whatever, neither direct nor occasional. The several things, which have now been mentioned, are all *peculiar* to the *mutable system*; and none of them ever did, nor ever will, belong to the immutable system of infinite perfection. *Sin* is the *first*, and negative perception, or *misery* is the *last*, of the WHOLE CHAIN of causes and effects, relative to all the EVIL, that ever did, or ever will be introduced. Sin produces falsehood; falsehood perverts veracity; and thus changes it to impurity; impurity produces perversity; falsehood, just as far as it is not immediately counteracted, produces iniquity in addition to perversity; and iniquity produces negative perception, in which all pain or misery intirely consists. *Sin*, therefore, is the *first cause*, of which all *misery*, and nothing but misery, is the *ultimate consequence*.

It is the universal nature of falsehood, whenever it finds admission into the internal system, to pervert veracity; and thus cause it to produce an effect, directly opposite to what it would, if it operated alone. It is the peculiar property of this horrible monster to "PERVERT all equity," and "hold the truth in unrighteousness." (Mic. iii. 9. Rom. i. 18.) Like Elymas, the sorcerer, "it is full of all subtilty, and all mischief; the child of the devil, the enemy of all righteousness, that will not cease to PERVERT the right way of the Lord." (Acts xiii. 10.) Veracity may exist alone, in a state of purity: and, whenever this is the case, it will always produce equity, or true perception; but falsehood, always does, whenever it is introduced, coexist with veracity; and, therefore, not on-

ly *prevents* it from producing equity ; but also, by perverting, or turning it from its proper course, causes it to produce *perversity*. And it is the universal nature of falsehood, not only to pervert or defile, veracity, but also, unless it is counteracted, to produce iniquity. And when iniquity has once *begun* to operate, in the production of pain or misery ; there is only one thing, in the whole of the universal system, that ever can prevent its *continuing* to operate, with increasing force, through endless duration ; and *that* is what we call the *counteractive principle*. And this is the same as the *vital* principle of the mind itself. Which vital principle is the very same as that GLORIOUS TRUTH, which we have so often mentioned ; viz, that, which consists in *the present absolute possibility of being eternally happy*, and which constitutes the Second of the Three adorable Subsistences, which are essential to the Divine Nature. And, therefore, the soul, in once losing this sacred, this infinitely important Principle, will lose ALL for eternity.....even the Deity himself, considered as being “ the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort ;” (2 Cor. i. 3.) and consequently will lose all, that is valuable in the universe. The soul, therefore, being reduced to this most deplorably wretched condition, and being absolutely cut off from all connexion with the external state of things, will be intirely left under the full dominion of iniquity, which, having fixed its permanent, and eternal residence in the PAST, will incessantly operate, with relation to the PRESENT, beyond all control ; still acquiring additional force, in proportion as *past time* continues to extend its length, while, through all its endless, progressive stages, it is for ever advancing on towards infinity.

Perversity is, in one sense, agreeable. For, though it never agrees with the *reality* of things; yet it always agrees with *appearance*. But iniquity never agrees with the reality of things, nor even with *appearance*; and therefore it is, in the very nature of it, disagreeable.... Hence, perversity and iniquity, both taken together, imply what is agreeable and disagreeable; and, consequently, may, with propriety, be denominated, "The *knowledge of good and evil*." And hence it is, that we are expressly commanded to abstain from the tree, that yields this most destructive kind of fruit. Falsehood is naturally calculated to produce a twofold effect. First; it is calculated to *pervert veracity*, or turn it out of its proper course, so as to make it produce *perversity*, instead of *equity*. Secondly; it is calculated to *produce iniquity*.... And in the first of these two ways, it *always* does, in fact, operate, whenever it is introduced into the internal system. That is, it does, in every instance, whenever it becomes present, *pervert veracity*, or "hold the truth in unrighteousness." It is universally the case; that veracity, in consequence of having falsehood combined with it, will produce an effect, directly opposite to what it would produce, if it operated alone.

So much mischief, therefore, falsehood always does, whenever it becomes present, in a state of combination with veracity. It perverts the truth; in consequence of which perversion, the mind is deprived of that true perception, which it would otherwise have had, and is presented with a perception of falsehood, in its stead. But this is not all. For falsehood will not rest satisfied in merely perverting veracity, and thus doing all the mischief it can, in this way; but it always will, whenever it is admitted into

the internal system, unless some *counteractive perception* should be present to prevent it, produce *iniquity*. And *this*, having been once introduced, will immediately *begin*, and eternally *continue*, to operate in the production of *pain* or *misery*, unless it is prevented by that all-important and infinitely precious COUNTERACTIVE PRINCIPLE, of which we have spoken before. But if the soul, through obstinacy or neglect, or by *any means whatever*, has lost this counteractive principle; then it is utterly ruined, beyond all possibility of recovery. For without this principle, even the Deity himself cannot, because it implies a contradiction, rescue the soul from eternal misery. He cannot *save* without a *Saviour*.

It is of the greatest importance, that it should here be carefully observed, That there is an infinite difference between what we call *counteractive perception*, and that COUNTERACTIVE PRINCIPLE, which we have frequently mentioned, and which cannot be mentioned too often; for it is, as we have observed, absolutely essential to the Divine Existence, and the only vital principle of the finite mind. By counteractive perception is to be understood that, which is of such a nature, as to prevent falsehood from having that effect, in the production of iniquity, which it would naturally have, if it was not thus prevented..... Counteractive perception belongs only to one part of the mental system; viz. that, which consists in *belief*. There is one kind of belief, which is of a counteractive nature; and, therefore, is calculated to repel, at least, in some considerable degree, those immediately hurtful effects, which falsehood would otherwise produce. And since that class of perceptions, which contains the various kinds of *belief*, which belong to the mind, is, of all oth-

ers, the most important, we shall appropriate a particular term, or phrase, for the purpose of expressing it.

As we have called the whole, in general, which belongs to the mind, the *internal* or *mental system*; so we shall for the sake of discussing the subject, with a greater degree of precision, call that class of perceptions, in which the various kinds of *belief* are contained, the *fiducial system*. And, in this system, there are various distinct kinds of belief, among which are the following: viz. practical belief; the belief of falsehood; false belief; and speculative, or counteractive belief. There are also other kinds; particularly preference or choice; and indifference. Let it be observed, then, that practical belief, and the belief of falsehood, are directly opposite to each other: in the same proportion, therefore, as the former prevails, the latter will be wanting.

Whenever falsehood presents itself, in combination with practical evidence, it will so pervert it, as to make it produce a belief of falsehood, instead of true practical belief. Hence we may see, what mischief falsehood will *always* do, whenever it is introduced into the fiducial system. It always will, according to the degree of it, prevent practical belief: for, whenever it is introduced, it is naturally calculated to operate, in two ways: First; in the *perversion* of practical evidence; and, secondly; in the *production* of false belief. It never does, indeed, *directly* produce the belief of falsehood; but, by perverting practical evidence, it makes *that* produce it. In this *indirect* way, it is the universal nature of falsehood always to operate. And the other mode of its operation consists in its producing false belief, in *addition* to the belief of falsehood; or, iniquity, in *addition* to perversity. In the

first of these two ways, it will, whenever it is admitted, absolutely operate, and it will likewise operate, in the other way, just as far as it is not immediately prevented by counteractive evidence. Hence, it is not falsehood itself, *directly*, but it is *perverted* evidence, or *impurity*; that produces the belief of falsehood, or *perversity*; and it is falsehood itself, *directly*, which, just as far as it is not immediately prevented by counteractive evidence, that produces false belief, in addition to the belief of falsehood; or *iniquity*, in addition to *perversity*. Counteractive perception, and false belief, are directly opposite to each other: just as far, therefore, as there is the prevalence of the one, there will be the want of the other.... But it is worthy of special remark: That speculative, or counteractive perception, and *perversity*, consisting in the perception of falsehood, are perfectly consistent with each other. And hence it is, that a very great degree of *perversity* may insinuate itself into the heart, which, in its unrenewed state, “is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;” (Jer. xvii. 9.) and yet give the mind but very little immediate disturbance. Because, notwithstanding the secret predominance of falsehood, there may be so much counteractive evidence, and consequently, counteractive belief, as to repel, for the present, in a great measure, if not intirely, those terrible effects, which falsehood, when left to operate without restraint, is naturally calculated to produce. And, this being the case, the mind, though really affected with a horrible and destructive disease, which is constantly leading it on to meet death, in all its most dreadful forms, may fancy itself to be in a state of health and safety. And thus thousands and tens of thousands of mankind, possessing such a degree of counteractive belief, as to afford

a temporary armour, sufficient to defend them, for the present, against the disagreeable effects, which that falsehood, that has a secret, but yet predominant, dominion in their hearts, is naturally calculated to produce, pass along through the world, easy and unconcerned, till they meet their final destiny ; not considering, in the mean time, what a deadly foe to all their happiness, and the life of their souls, they are continually harbouring within themselves.

Should it be inquired, Whether there is, in counteractive or speculative belief, any thing wrong? We answer, That there is not. For it is in *falsehood*, and the effects, which it is naturally calculated to produce, that consists all the wrong, which can belong to the fiducial system. Or, if we consider the subject, in the most extensive view, that can possibly be taken of it, we may affirm, with undoubting assurance, That *that* act of the mind, which is called *SIN*, originally and radically, implies all, that is wrong, in the whole of the mental system ; and, indeed, in the whole of the universal system of things. But though it is readily granted, that there is not, in counteractive belief, simply considered, any thing wrong, yet it must be remembered, that *this kind* of belief alone never can answer any durable or effectual purpose. For all that it can do, is only to ward off, for the present, the blows, which falsehood aims against the peace and tranquility of the mind. There may be the highest degree of counteractive belief, and yet, notwithstanding this, falsehood may still remain undiminished, and continue to maintain its habitual sway over the mind. Counteractive belief, when it is actually present, will prevent false belief ; because these two are inconsistent with each

other. But counteractive belief, in its highest degree, has not the least tendency to prevent the belief of falsehood, nor falsehood itself. Because counteractive belief and the belief of falsehood may both exist in the fiducial system, at the same time. There is, therefore, the greatest need of caution to guard against being deceived by resting on any kind of belief, but only that, which is of a practical nature; because, without this, all other things, except iniquity and misery, will finally fail. We have full liberty to admit all the various kinds of belief, that can possibly be admitted, except the *belief of falsehood*. But still, it must be remembered, that amidst all the various kinds of belief, and all the various kinds of perception, that can present themselves to the mind, it is by the effectual exercise of practical belief in the glorious, the adorable and infinitely precious Mediator, and by this alone, that the soul can ever obtain eternal salvation.

If you inquire, Where you shall go, or what you shall do, in order to obtain that kind of evidence, which is calculated to produce practical belief? the answer is, That you are not required to go abroad in search of this evidence. For it is brought to your very door....it is brought as near as possible; and all, that remains, is for you to give it admittance, by *not rejecting* it. It is continually presenting itself....continually pressing upon you, and, as it were, unremittingly soliciting an entrance into your mind. You will say, perhaps, that you do not feel its effects....you do not actually experience that practical belief, which such kind of evidence is calculated to produce. It is very possible, that this may be the case. For there are, doubtless, many thousands, who have, for days, and months, and years, been attended with *this kind* of evi-

dence, and yet have never received from it any effectual, beneficial influence ; but, after all, have lived and died in unbelief ; and consequently, have lost their Saviour and their God, and exchanged all possibility of happiness ; even the very life of their souls, for a most wretched existence, in a state of eternal misery. If *you* are one, who have never yet been the subject of saving faith ; the reason is, not because there has not been *enough* done, for this purpose ; but because there has been *too much* done. It is not because there has not been *sufficient evidence* ; but because there has been *too much evidence* : for, there has, not only been *true* evidence, sufficient to have produced a complete degree of practical faith ; but there has, also, been the combination of *false* evidence with the *true* ; in consequence of which, the *latter* has been so *perverted* by the *former*, as to make it produce the *belief* of *falsehood* instead of *practical belief*. The reason, therefore, why you remain in your present sad situation, is not to be imputed to any want of Divine goodness or power ; for, as long as you do not “cease to do evil,” you never will, even with all the assistance, that heaven can afford, ever “learn to do well.” (Isa. i. 16, 17.) The Deity, from a perfect willingness to promote your eternal welfare, has, in more than ten thousand instances, actually presented you with a *full degree* of *true evidence*, completely prepared to produce the most beneficial effect ; but, in direct opposition to his most benevolent command, you have been combining *false evidence* with the *true* ; and have thereby converted the most salutary food into the worst kind of poison. And while you have remained destitute of saving faith, in consequence of your having thus continued “to hold the truth in unrighteousness,

and to pervert the right ways of the Lord," you have obtained, from counteractive belief, a temporary protection against the immediate attacks of that falsehood, which has taken, for the present, a quiet possession of your soul. But the truce, which you are now holding with this mortal enemy, must, within a short duration, expire; for it will, unless it should, in due season, be effectually conquered, very soon unmask itself, disclosing its own proper form, in that of a most horrible monster, armed with death and eternal destruction. It is not wrong, as we have already observed, for you to have counteractive belief; but *this* being perfectly distinct from *practical faith*, is by no means to be depended on for safety; any more than a person's drinking cold water to mitigate the rage of a burning fever, while the disorder itself, in the essence of it, still continues the same. Counteractive belief, without practical, will, in the final result, answer no better purpose than the use of opiates, or anodynes to alleviate the pain, which a person, labouring under a deep rooted disease, might otherwise feel, while the *radical cause* remains unremoved. In this case, it is evident, that the disease, without the seasonable application of some effectual remedy, sufficient to restore *real health*, will *secretly*, but yet *surely* introduce death, by intirely destroying the constitution of the person, who is the subject of the malady. Falsehood is the disease of the soul; a disease of too obstinate a nature to yield to any human prescriptions. The remedy must be Divine. Instead, therefore, of relying on any temporary expedients, you must repose your whole trust, in the great Mediator.....you must have recourse to that glorious COUNTERACTIVE PRINCIPLE, on which the very life of your soul wholly depends. With-

out this Principle you can, indeed, *exist*, and even must necessarily retain a miserable existence for ever; but, without this principle, you cannot *live*. *Counteractive perception* may serve the temporary purpose of relieving you from present pain; but it is that infinitely important COUNTERACTIVE PRINCIPLE, which we have so often mentioned, and that alone, that can save you from endless wo, and introduce you into a state of unspeakable happiness, consisting in the full and eternal enjoyment of that adorable being, to whose nature, and perfections essentially belongs that very same Divine Principle, which is the only *vital principle* of your own soul. This Principle, therefore, is of more value than ten thousand worlds; for this is your only Redeemer, your only Saviour; and consequently, by once losing this, you will lose all....but your own endless existence, in a miserable eternity.

CHAPTER XI.

CONTAINING RECAPITULATORY REMARKS ON PERCEPTION.

WE have taken a general view of the various kinds of perception, that belong to the mental system, together with the several objects, both internal and external, to which those perceptions respectively relate. The mind itself, with regard to all the perceptions, that immediately attend it, is intirely passive; being necessarily conscious of that endless series, the parts of which, in continual succession, are presenting themselves, and which are all produced by particular causes, intirely distinct from the mind itself. The proximate cause, and that,

which is the same, as what we call the *internal*, or *apparent object* of all positive perception, consists in what we have denominated *appearance*, or *evidence*. Of evidence, considered in the most general or extensive view, there are two perfectly distinct kinds. The first of these consists in that, which corresponds to the reality of things. This, therefore, we denominate *true evidence*. The other kind is that, which does not correspond to the reality of things; and this we call *false evidence*; or, expressing it by a single term, *falsehood*. True evidence, whenever it operates alone, without having falsehood combined with it, always produces true perception. And true evidence itself is the immediate object of all true perception; which, having once had a momentary existence in the present, immediately recedes from the present to the past. And, by thus receding, it becomes separated from its apparent object; which separation reduces the *apparent object* to a state of nonexistence, while the *real object* still remains the same as before. Hence it follows, that there may be a series of true perceptions, successively presenting themselves to the mind, and corresponding, each in its turn, to the same real object. But it is evident, from what has just been observed, that every true perception, whatever its *real* object may be, must have, when it is actually present, an *apparent* object peculiar to itself.... That is; every new perception must have a new apparent object. And consequently; there may be a series of true perceptions, continually flowing from the future to the present, and from the present to the past, each in its turn, presenting itself to the mind, without having any effect on the external state of things; because any perception's being separated merely from its apparent, or

internal object, will not have any *external* effect. But when any perception is separated from its *real* object, in which separation universally consists, what we call VOLITION, a correspondent external effect will then be produced.

We have observed, that true evidence, whenever it operates alone, will produce true perception; but that, whenever it is perverted, it will produce the perception of falsehood. For it is the universal nature of falsehood, whenever it is combined with true evidence, to corrupt or defile it; that is, to pervert it, so that it will produce an effect, intirely different from what it would, if it existed alone, in a state of purity. The reason is, because true evidence, whenever falsehood is combined with it, is turned out of its proper course; so that, from the very nature of the case, it cannot possibly produce the same effect, that it would otherwise produce, but must necessarily produce one, which is directly opposite. And this is the very reason why the Deity, perfectly knowing the perverse and injurious nature of falsehood, has, from a most benevolent regard for the welfare of his rational offspring, given them a strict prohibitory command to absolutely refrain from doing that, which will open the way for its admission into the mental system. In the transgression of this command all SIN universally consists. "For sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John iii. 4.)

The perception of falsehood, when it is alone (that is, without the addition of false perception) being, in this case, equal to its object, will, when it is separated from it, reduce it to nothing; because an equal, being separated from its equal, will leave no remainder. It is worthy, however, of special remark, that the perception of

falsehood is not always to be found alone. For it is, sometimes, and indeed very often, the case, that there is false perception, *in addition* to the perception of falsehood. Now since the perception of falsehood alone is *equal* to its object; therefore, false perception, *in addition* to the perception of falsehood, must be *more* than equal; that is, it must be unequal. Consequently, when false perception, being past, is separated from its object, it will, on account of its **INEQUALITY**, leave a **NEGATIVE REMAINDER**, in the present; that is, it will reduce its object to a state *below* that of nonexistence. And this effect, which is thus produced, and which, instead of being *mere nothing*, is really *below*, or *worse* than *nothing*, is what we call **NEGATIVE PERCEPTION**, and is that, in which all **PAIN** or **MISERY** universally consists. This false perception, after having once begun to operate, in the production of pain, will either immediately *cease*, or it will for ever *continue* to operate; just according as the all-important **COUNTERACTIVE PRINCIPLE**...the infinitely precious **REDEEMER**, is, or is not, present. For, if the soul has not lost its *vital principle*; then *this* will counteract the operation of false perception....it will extinguish the fire, that has begun to be kindled. And as long as this counteractive principle remains, it will, after any false perception has been introduced, and has begun to operate, prevent its *continued* operation. Therefore, the particular effects, resulting from the momentary operation of the several false perceptions, which are, from time to time, introduced, may be considered as being only sparks of that fire, which, in a future eternity, will, with respect to those, who have actually lost the vital principle of their souls, incessantly continue to burn, with increasing fury,

through endless duration. But if, with respect to any, who have not been reduced to this inexpressibly dreadful condition, the principle of eternal death should be removed; and consequently, there should be an indissoluble union with the Saviour; then the soul, in this case, after having had a short and transient combat with sin and sorrow, will be released from the burdens and imperfections of mortality, and will be admitted to a state of happiness, more noble, exalted, and sublime, than mortal eye has ever seen, or ear heard, or even imagination itself, in its boldest flights, conceived. (1 Cor. ii. 9.)

We have shown, that true evidence will produce, either true perception, or the perception of falsehood, just according as it is *pure*, or *perverted* by falsehood; and that false evidence, that is, falsehood itself, just as far as it is not counteracted, will produce false perception, *in addition* to the perception of falsehood. Now since the perception of falsehood, when considered by itself, is *equal* to its object; consequently, false perception, *in addition* to it, is *more* than equal, and therefore constitutes the relation of *inequality*; and *this* is the same as *iniquity*.... The term, *inequality*, when considered in a general view, is of very extensive signification, and will apply to a great variety of cases; but *that*, which is implied in *false perception*, is what we denominate INIQUITY, and is peculiar to the mental system. Here, then, there are two things, both of which relate to falsehood. *One* of these consists in *the perception of falsehood*, and is produced by *true evidence*, as far as it is *corrupted* or *defiled*; and the *other* is *false perception*, which is produced by *falsehood itself*, as far as it is *not counteracted*. *Both* of them, therefore, *taken together*, constitute a relation,

which implies what is *agreeable*, and what is *disagreeable*. And, consequently, these two perceptions, both taken together, may be denominated “the knowledge of good and evil.” It may, therefore, at first view, seem, that, according to the true nature and reason of things, one of these two kinds of perception must be right. For, if that, which is *evil*, is *wrong*; then, how can there be any thing *wrong* in that, which is *good*?

In order to solve this seeming difficulty, it must be observed; That the good and the evil, in this case, both relate to falsehood: which is, in the very nature of it, absolutely injurious to the mind. For under the deceitful mask of a friend, it is a real enemy; always aiming, as far as possible, at the eternal ruin of the soul. *Nothing* therefore, ought ever to have *any relation* to it, in any way whatever. Nothing ought to have any *agreement* or *disagreement* with it. And, consequently, nothing ought ever to be done to give it admission into the mental system. For it always does, as far as it is admitted, prevent *real good*; and all the good that it ever can be instrumental in producing, is *apparent* only, and not *real*. Therefore, every TRANSGRESSION of that law, which, being sanctioned by infinite authority, and originating in boundless benevolence, most strictly requires all finite free agents not to do that, which, as an antecedent, will be attended with the introduction of falsehood, as its unavoidable consequence, is ABSOLUTELY WRONG. This absolutely wrong.....this most strictly forbidden action, is what we call SIN.

CHAPTER XII.

ON LIBERTY, AND MORAL AGENCY.

HAVING taken a view of the various kinds of perception, together with their respective objects, we shall now proceed to consider the MIND ITSELF, with relation to POWER.....the power of the Deity; even that, which has been from eternity. “For there is no power but of God.” (Rom. xiii. 1.) There is a perfect distinction between *liberty* and *moral agency*; for the former universally *precedes* the latter. Both of them, however, have their whole foundation in, and are intirely dependent on, the power of the Deity; even his *twofold power*, relative to the FUTURE VOLITION of any finite agent. Liberty and necessity, with relation to the *same act* of the finite mind, are inconsistent with each other. The finite mind, previous to its actual agreement with either term of that balance of power, with respect to future volition, which balance the Deity has, from all eternity, sustained, is in a state of perfect liberty to take either side. But as soon as it has actually taken *one* side, it will then have no liberty to take the *other*. The beginning of necessity is the end of liberty. In the special relation of the finite mind to the Divine power, all its moral agency intirely consists. This relation is perfectly distinct from all perception, and perfectly distinct from volition. With respect to any term, whereby this relation is to be expressed, common language is intirely defective. We shall, therefore, appropriate a complex term for the purpose of expressing it, calling it *mental agreement*. And by this

is to be understood the agreement of the finite mind with one side or the other, of that twofold power, with which the Divine Mind has, in respect to *future volition*, been from all eternity invested. There is a distinction between moral action, as it relates to the finite mind, and as it relates to the Deity. For in one case, it consists in the finite mind's *agreeing* with *one* term of the Deity's twofold power; but in the other case, it consists in the Deity's *exerting* his own power, by *retaining one term* and *remitting the other*. The inquiry with regard to moral action, respecting what is the foundation of it, and wherein it consists, is of the most interesting importance; for it relates to good or evil, and is attended with eternal consequences. Therefore, to say, that our *own* moral actions, or *those* of the *Deity*, which immediately relate to us, are indifferent, or something in which we have no special concern, appears, at first view, with the highest degree of evidence, to be perfectly inconsistent. No language is equal to the description of the depravity, that predominates in the heart of any one, who, with a cold apathy, or stupid insensibility, can think or say, We ought, in all cases, to leave the Deity to act his own pleasure, without feeling ourselves particularly interested in his conduct. For though it is very true, that we must leave him to act his own pleasure, or manifest his displeasure, whenever he sees fit; yet it is certain, at the same time, that there can be nothing of greater importance, than that we should know, as far as our own conduct is concerned, what will provoke his anger, and what will procure his favour; so that, by strictly adhering to the rule, he has given us, we may avoid the one, and obtain the other. Because it is the one or the other, which intirely constitutes all the mi-

sery, or the happiness, that any finite beings can suffer or enjoy. For, utterly vain are all pretences of having any true love of the Deity, without a special regard to the infinite evil of being for ever separated from him, and the infinite good of being admitted to dwell for ever, in his happifying presence.

We shall now proceed to consider what is the foundation of moral action, and wherein it consists, both, as it relates to the finite mind, and as it relates to the Deity, considered as being the supreme universal moral Governor of all finite free agents. In considering the divine moral government, *action*, in both these views of it, must always be brought into the account. It must not, therefore, be supposed, that it can be any thing absolutely unconnected and alone. But the moral action of the finite mind, and that of the Deity, must be considered as having a relation to each other. The finite mind, in order to avoid the evil and obtain the good, which the Deity has in his own power, to inflict, or confer, ought always to act according to the rule, which has, for that very purpose, been prescribed. The Deity, sustaining the character of a moral Governor, of infinite and unchangeable rectitude, always regards the action of the finite agent, as being a *proper cause* or *fit reason*, why he should so *exert* his power, as to *inflict* the *evil* or *confer* the *good*, according as the rule, which he had before prescribed for the conduct of the finite agent; has been *transgressed* or *obeyed*. This is the universal plan of that moral government, which belongs to Him, “ Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life. But unto them that are con-

tentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath. tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man, that doth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man, that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. ii. 6.....11.)

All moral action, both that which belongs to the finite, and that which belongs to the infinite Mind, has its foundation in that twofold power, implying a possibility of good and a possibility of evil, which is in the hand of the Supreme "Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy." (James iv. 12.) The *moral action* of a finite mind consists in the *agreement* of the mind itself with one term of the Deity's twofold power; and that of the Deity consists in his retaining that one term, with which the finite mind agrees, and remitting the opposite term. Hence it follows; that ALL POWER and ALL EXERTION of power belong to the Deity. It is he, therefore, who produces all effects. Hence it is evident, that there is a *right* and a *wrong*, with regard to the moral actions of finite agents. And, according to the nature of those actions, the Deity SEES FIT to confer good or inflict evil on them, to whom such actions belong. This is agreeable to that irreversible order of things, which the Universal Cause of all effects will, in his moral government, invariably pursue.

The Deity is that "One Lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy." He has, therefore, a SAVING and a DESTROYING power; either of which he can, with equal ease, exert, in the salvation or destruction of any finite agent, who takes the right or the wrong side of this two-

fold power, on which all liberty and moral agency intirely depend. There is, therefore, previous to the solemn crisis, which brings the state of the soul to its final decision, a BALANCE of power, on which two amazing eternities hang suspended. But when the finite agent has once taken one term of that twofold power, which involves his final destiny ; then the scale will be turned, so as to fix his state of happiness or misery, beyond all possibility of its ever being reversed. Hence it is evident, that the Deity, in the exercise of his government over moral agents, does not operate alone ; and, therefore, in order to have a right view of this most important subject, the actions of *finite beings*, as well as those of the *Supreme Agent*, must be brought into the account. For though the Deity does, by the exertion of his own power, produce every effect ; yet he never produces *any effect without a cause*. Therefore, in the external system of matter and motion, he produces effects, according to natural causes ; but with respect to his mode of operation in the mental system, the case is intirely different. For here, the *actions* of finite free agents are the *proper causes*, or antecedents, according to which the Universal Agent produces correspondent *effects* or consequences. And since there is an absolute and perfect distinction between the actions of finite free agents, and all other things, therefore, for the sake of expressing this distinction, and fixing a definite signification to the terms which we have occasion to use, we denominate those actions, the *moral causes*, according to which the Supreme moral Governor does, by the exertion of his own power, produce correspondent effects, consisting in good or evil, that is, happiness or misery ; just according as the actions or ante-

cedents, in correspondence to which those effects are produced, have the quality of being right or wrong.

Every action presupposes power. For it is evident, that, without this, there is no foundation for action. Therefore, to suppose, that the mind ever acts, without having any thing to do with power, is inconsistent. The foundation of all moral action is, as we have said, that twofold power, with which HE, to whom all power belongs, has, from eternity, been invested. This twofold power, considered in a most general view, and as relating to eternal consequences, with respect to finite agents, consists of two terms, one of which implies a possibility of being eternally happy, and the other, a possibility of being eternally miserable. The first of these, considered with relation to the finite mind, we call, the Counteractive Principle, the Mediator, or the Saviour; because it is by this, that the soul, as long as it retains any capacity of happiness, is continually preserved, from eternal misery; and the other we call, the adversary or the destroyer; because this is the only foundation of the destruction, or final misery of the soul. For it is evident; that the Deity cannot *save*, without a *saving power*, or, a *Saviour*; nor *destroy*, without a *destroying power*, or, a *destroyer*. But since he originally possesses *both* of these, he does, therefore, sustain the character of being the “one Law-giver, who is able to save and destroy.” (James iv. 12.) The AGREEMENT of any finite mind with that term of the Deity’s twofold power, which implies a possibility of life, peace, and happiness, (or its *agreement* with the Saviour) is a moral action, which, in the very nature of it, is RIGHT; and, therefore, its agreement with the *opposite* term; or that, which implies the possibility of disorder,

death and misery (that is, its agreement with the destroyer) is absolutely **WRONG**. And this *last* is that kind of action, which we call **SIN**. This is an action, which, since it is, in its own nature, absolutely wrong, the Deity has, in the moral law, most strictly prohibited. Hence we may see the foundation of the moral law.

With regard to the universal, immutable system of infinite perfection, which originally, necessarily and essentially belongs to the Deity himself, there is only one kind of power; consisting in that, which from eternity to eternity, and throughout immensity, wholly relates to the greatest possible good, perfection, and happiness..... This universal, immutable system is of such a nature, as to admit the possibility of a mutable system, to which created existence and finite beings, in all their infinite variety of diversified forms, and all their endless succession of changes, may belong. For had there not been an original possibility of a mutable, as well as an immutable system, then there never could have been any such thing as creation, nor any created existence..... The Deity, therefore, has other power than what simply relates to his own existence, and his own immutable system of infinite perfection. He has power relative to a mutable system; and not a mere simple power only, but even a twofold power; so that he can either produce, or withhold, the event, to which his power relates, just according as he may see fit, or as occasion may require. Should you ask, Whether he has not some plan respecting his own conduct? We answer; That he has, and eternally has had, a universal plan; which is, always to act according to his own will, in doing whatever he sees fit to do; and that is, always to exert his power, in

the production of consequences or effects, in correspondence to their respective antecedents or causes.... If you should inquire, Whether he has not some plan relative to the moral conduct of created beings ! The answer is, That he has a universal plan ; which is, that they should AGREE with one term of his twofold power ; and that the agreement should be such as to constitute an antecedent, which will be attended with a good consequence. Hence his language respecting every finite free agent is.....“ LET HIM TAKE HOLD OF MY STRENGTH, THAT HE MAY MAKE PEACE WITH ME, AND HE SHALL MAKE PEACE WITH ME.” (Isa. xxvii. v.)

If there was only one time ; that is, only the present, then there would, in respect to any thing, that can exist in immensity, be only one kind of power consisting in that, which is coincident with necessity. But since there is a future eternity, as well as a present immensity, it is perfectly consistent, that there should be, and therefore there actually is, a twofold power, relative to the mutable system. This twofold power is that, with which the Deity eternally has been invested, and which, from the want of any other term whereby to express it, we have called, “ a balance of power.” This balance, which, in the very nature of it, implies a possibility on the affirmative and negative side, and which, therefore, implies no particular necessity, on either side, respecting the future event to which it relates, is the grand foundation of all liberty and moral agency, consisting in the free actions of finite beings ; it is also the foundation of all the Deity’s particular *exertions* of his own power. For, with regard

to any event, respecting which there is no possibility, but only on one side, the possibility is the same as necessity. And, since necessity is, in its own nature, absolutely inflexible, so as not to be turned from one side to the other ; therefore, in this case, nothing remains to be done ; but the necessity must be left to continue exactly as it is, without any alteration ; and the event, whatever it may be, must exist, or not exist ; just as the necessity, that relates to it, requires. But it makes an essential difference, with respect to any event, with regard to which there is a previous balance of power....For, in this case, there is really something to be done ; it remains for the Deity, by the exertion of his own power, to introduce a particular necessity, on one side or the other, according as he sees fit, whenever the proper time arrives, for him to turn the scale. But whenever the scale has once been actually turned, it does not belong to any being to reverse the decisive deed ; even though it should involve the eternal destiny of the finite mind. Because infinite perfection admits no possibility of inverting the immutable order of things, nor of reconciling contradictions. As long as there continues to be a balance of power, it is perfectly consistent for the Deity, to introduce, at any future time, a particular necessity, on *either side*. But when he has once formed a decision, by turning the scale, there is no power whatever, that can change the unalterable decree. Immutable perfection requires, that this should be the case ; the opposite supposition implies the inversion of all regularity and order. Therefore, if any one should presume to assert, and with persevering obstinacy, strive to

maintain, that what is unchangeable, may admit of alteration, or that Omnipotence can perform impossibilities, he will soon find himself afloat on the wild waves of a shoreless ocean, or plunged in a chaos of fathomless depth.

There is a certain event, peculiarly belonging to the mental system, which consists in the *separation* of a perception from its real object. With respect to this event, language is intirely defective ; there having been no term introduced for the purpose of expressing it. The term, "volition," has, indeed, been very frequently used ; but then it has been used to signify a certain kind of *perception* ; viz. that, which is otherwise called *preference* or *choice*, which is something perfectly distinct from that peculiar event, which consists in the *separation* of *perception* from its *real object*. This being the case, we must either introduce some intirely new term to express that particular event, that has been mentioned ; or else adopt some term, which has already been introduced, but has been used for a different purpose. The last of these two methods seems to be preferable to the first. We shall, therefore, appropriate the term, VOLITION, to signify, not any *perception* whatever, but that particular event, which consists in the SEPARATION of any perception, which is capable of being separated, from its REAL OBJECT. In treating on this subject, it will, therefore, at least be very convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to have some appropriate term for the purpose of expressing that *kind* of *perception*, which is capable of being *separated* from its *real object* ; we shall, therefore, adopt, for this purpose, the term, *volitive perception*. We have selected the epithet, *volitive*, on account of its being immediately derived from the term, *volition*. Volitive perception, therefore, according to the

uniform sense, in which we shall use the term, signifies *any perception*, which can be *separated* from its *real object*; and the actual *separation itself* will uniformly be expressed by the term, *volition*. With regard to every volition, that can ever be introduced, in any future time, the Deity is, and from all eternity has been, invested with a twofold power, implying a possibility of the volition's being present, and a possibility of its not being present, in that future time, to which these two possibilities relate. The finite mind is so constituted, as to imply a *general necessity* of its *future agreement*, with one or the other of these two possibilities, that relate to its own volition; but there is no *necessity* of its agreeing with *either* of them, IN PARTICULAR, till the *time* of its agreement, with one or the other, becomes ACTUALLY PRESENT.

But when the finite mind actually agrees with one of the two possibilities, relative to its own volition, then the Deity will turn the scale, by *retaining* that possibility, with which the finite mind agrees, and *removing* the other; and, by this exertion of his power, he will *produce*, or *prevent*, the volition, just according as the possibility, which he thus retains, is on the *affirmative* or *negative side*. Previous to this exertion of divine power, there is no *particular necessity* of any future volition's being present, nor of its not being present; but when the divine power is *actually exerted*, in the manner, which has already been mentioned, *then* a particular necessity will be introduced.

But since, with respect to future volition, there are two possibilities, and the mind is at *liberty* to agree with *either* of them, therefore, its agreement with the possibility of

volition's being present, may, for the sake of distinction, be called affirmative mental agreement; and its agreement with the possibility of volition's not being present, may be called negative mental agreement. And, for the sake of a shorter and more convenient form of expression, the terms, mental consent, and mental dissent; or even the simple terms, *consent* and *dissent*, may be occasionally used. Whenever, therefore, we use the terms, *consent* and *dissent*, we shall use them in a peculiar appropriated sense, as signifying *mental agreement*; that is, the agreement of the finite mind with the possibility of any future volition's being present, or the possibility of its not being present. And the way is now prepared for introducing the observation, That every moral action of any finite free agent, universally consists, not in any kind of perception, nor in volition, but in mental agreement; that is, in consent or dissent.

Moral action is to be reckoned among the most important events, that can exist, in the mutable system, on account of the infinitely interesting consequences, with which it is attended. It is by moral action, that the finite mind is introduced to its eternal destiny of good or evil, life or death; according to the nature of the action, which is the antecedent. And the nature of the action itself intirely depends on the nature of the possibility, with which the mind agrees. For its agreement with the possibility of real good constitutes an action, which is morally good. The Deity, therefore, has granted complete moral liberty, to the greatest extent, for the finite mind to agree with this possibility. Because such an agreement will be attended with a consequence, of a beneficial and happyfying nature. And the more real good and true happi-

ness the finite mind enjoys, the greater conformity it will have to the Deity, who, in his own immutable nature, is essentially good and happy. But the agreement of the mind with the possibility of evil constitutes an action, which, in the very nature of it, is morally evil. Consequently, the Deity has never granted any *moral* liberty; or, he has never given any permission, not even in the least degree, for any finite free agent to have any mental agreement with that term of his twofold power, which implies a possibility of evil. But he has, from infinite benevolence, and the most kind regard for the highest welfare of all finite perceptive beings, ordained a law, which, in its own essential and eternal nature, is perfectly holy, just, and good, thereby absolutely and most strictly prohibiting them from having any such agreement. Because it can never be attended with any real good consequence; but must, on the contrary, be attended with a consequence, subversive of all true peace and real enjoyment. And the deeper the mind is involved in darkness, discord, and misery, the greater will be its unlikeness to the ever blessed God, whose very nature consists in light, harmony, and happiness. Hence it is, that the Father of lights, the supreme, all-bountiful Author of every good and perfect gift, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning, has given a universal command, exhibited in the form of a most solemn address: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: but of that thou shalt not eat; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Jam. i. 17. Gen. ii. 16, 17.)

It is worthy of special observation; that the possibility of evil, considered in itself, never does, in the least de-

gree, imply any kind of evil whatever, neither natural nor moral. But it is intirely in the AGREEMENT of the finite mind with this possibility, that all moral evil universally consists. And *moral* evil, otherwise called *sin*, is the original antecedent, of which all the *natural* evil, that ever has been, or ever will be, introduced, is the consequence.

Here, then, we may clearly see, at one view, the very first origin of all evil. It begins, not in the possibility, considered in itself, or as it is, in its original state, in the hand of the Deity; but, in the *forbidden action* of the finite mind. That balance of power, which is the foundation of free agency, involves all the possibility, that relates to the most interesting events, that can ever be introduced. For volition, according to its having been, or not having been, present, at some particular time, is attended with the most amazing consequences; consequences, extending forward through endless futurity, and implicating the fixed and final fate of millions of perceptive beings, who are, by an unalterable decree, predestinated to exist through a length of future duration, equal to that of the existence of that Omnipotent Being, who, from all eternity, continued to hold the balance of power, with which he was originally invested, till the decisive period arrived, when MENTAL AGREEMENT rendered it proper for him to turn the irreversible scale. Hence we may see what infinitely important things, as far as they relate to the finite agent, depend on *mental agreement*, in consequence of which volition is produced or prevented. And now, if it should be inquired, What the finite mind must do *first*, in order to prepare the way for mental agreement? The answer is; That it has nothing to do *first*. Because mental agreement itself is the

very FIRST thing, that is to be done. For it is, in this very thing, that all the moral action of any finite agent consists. The way for mental agreement has been *eternally prepared*. For the Deity has always possessed a twofold power; relative to every future volition, that ever can exist. All, therefore, that remains for any finite free agent to do, is to take one side, or the other. And HE, to whom all power belongs, will turn the scale according to the particular side, which will be actually taken by the finite agent. That balance of power, which has always been in the hand of the Deity, is the foundation of all freedom or liberty. For the finite mind, as long as it is attended with an equal possibility, on each side, relative to its own future volition, is perfectly free, or disengaged from natural necessity; and, therefore, is in a state of freedom, having a natural liberty to agree with either term. For it implies a contradiction to say, That there is a balance of power, relative to future volition; and that there is, at the same time, a particular previous necessity, respecting that event. Because necessity universally consists in that possibility, which is all on *one* side, without any on the *other*; whereas, a balance of power implies an *equal* possibility on *each side*, and therefore is inconsistent with necessity. But granting, that the mind has *natural* liberty, is it not, in some cases, under a *moral inability*? We answer; That there is one case, and but only one, in which the mind, though it has a *natural*, yet has no *moral* liberty. For it is absolutely impossible, that the mind should, *according to the moral law*, agree with the possibility of evil: and, this being the case, it is therefore, under an absolute *moral* inability of making any

agreement of this kind. Consequently, the mind, in this case, though it has a *natural*, yet has no *moral*, liberty ; but, in all other cases, it has, as long as it continues to be attended with the twofold power of the Deity, relative to its own future volition, a liberty both natural and moral.

Sin, which is a moral action, consisting in the agreement of the finite mind, with the possibility of evil, is, in the strictest sense, a cause or antecedent ; and therefore, never is the effect or consequence of any preceding cause whatever. It is universally true, that every effect has a cause ; yet sin has no cause ; for as we have just said, it is not an effect. It is to be observed, however, that sin is not self-existent ; for it is absolutely dependent on the power of the Deity, and universally consists in the agreement of the finite mind, with the prohibited term of his twofold power. There never was, notwithstanding this, any original necessity, neither natural nor moral, of the existence of sin. That there never was any previous *natural* necessity, is evident. Because there was, from all eternity, till the very time of sin's actually existing, a perfect balance of power, implying on each side, an equal possibility, and this state of things was inconsistent with *natural* necessity. It is also evident, that there never was any *moral* necessity of the existence of sin. For it was absolutely *impossible*, that it should ever exist in a *lawful* manner, or *according to the moral law*. The Deity, by the exertion of his own power, produces every effect, that ever exists throughout the whole of the mutable system ; including every particle of matter, every motion, every perception, and every volition ; but he never produces sin. He is the universal cause of every effect ; and therefore, as far as

things can be considered as being both causes and effects, which is the case in a vast variety of instances, he is the Supreme Cause of all causes. But he is not the cause of any thing which is a *cause* only, and not an *effect*; and therefore, he is not the cause of sin. But though there is no reason whatever for the existence of moral evil; yet there is, on the contrary, the highest, most fit, and proper moral reason, or final cause, for the existence of that kind of action, in finite free agents, which is denominated moral good. For this is, in its own nature, universally calculated to answer the greatest, most excellent, and valuable end; consisting in a conformity to the Deity, who is the infinite, immutable, and eternal standard of all perfection.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE WILL; TOGETHER WITH THE NATURE AND USE
OF MOTIVES.

SINCE that balance of power, with which the Deity has always been invested, universally relates not to the *present*, nor the *past*, but to the future; hence it is, that the term, *WILL*, is so frequently used, with respect to the soul, as it relates to moral action. This term is properly an *auxiliary verb*, introduced for the purpose of expressing what relates to *future time*. As with respect to the *present*, we use the term, *is*; and with respect to the *past*, the term, *was*, or *has been*; so, with respect to the *FUTURE*, we use the term, *WILL*. The mind or soul, while it is in a state of freedom or liberty; that is, as long as there is, in the hand of the Deity, a balance of power,

with respect to the soul's future volition, has, in distinction from every thing else, a peculiar relation to the *future*. This being the case, it is universally true, in general, That the soul WILL, without any particular previous necessity, AGREE with one term or the other of the Deity's twofold power, with respect to volition. That is, it WILL have a particular consent or dissent, with respect to its own volition. And therefore, the Deity WILL, by the exertion of his own power, so turn the scale as to produce or prevent the volition itself. That is, when the finite mind comes to an actual agreement with either side of that balance of power, which the Deity has eternally possessed, and which he still continues to hold, with respect to the finite mind's future volition; *then* the Deity himself, by his exertion, WILL accordingly introduce, on one side or the other, a particular necessity, with regard to that future volition, respecting which there is *now* no particular necessity, on either side. And the reason, why there is not now any particular necessity, is, because the Deity now holds a balance of power, and thereby leaves the finite mind in a state of perfect freedom, with respect to its own future volition. Hence it is evident; that the mind, as long as it continues to be free, has, in distinction from every thing else whatever, a peculiar relation to futurity. Of the mind or soul, therefore, as long as it continues in a state of freedom, according to what has been explained, it may be said, in a different sense from what can be said of any thing else, that relates to futurity, that it has A WILL, that is, A FREE WILL.....A WILL, which is FREE from all *necessity*. For, by putting the principal verb [agree] in the infinitive mode, the auxiliary verb [will] may be changed to a noun. Therefore, in

stead of saying, That the soul *will agree* with one term of the Deity's twofold power, relative to its own future volition, it may, with equal propriety, be said, That it has *A WILL to agree*, &c. It may, indeed, in some sense, be said, that other things, that relate to futurity, have *a will*. Thus; any one may say, That the Sun *will rise*; or, if he chuses to adopt such a mode of expression, That the Sun has *a will* to rise; and so in other instances without number. But then it must be observed (and the observation is of infinitely greater importance than what may, perhaps, to every one, immediately appear) That there is not any thing in particular, except the soul, that has any *will* but only what is attended with actual or conditional necessity. But the soul, while there continues to be, in the hand of the Deity, a balance of power, relative to its future volition, has a *WILL*, which is intirely free from necessity. It may be seen, from what has been said, wherein universally consists the *WILL*, that belongs to the soul. As long as the Deity continues to hold a balance of power, relative to the soul's future volition; so long it will continue to be true, That it *will agree*, in some future time, with one term of the Deity's twofold power; or, which is exactly the same, it will be true, That it has a *WILL to agree*, &c. This, therefore, is the real, the only *WILL*, which the soul, as a moral agent, does or ever can possess. And this *WILL* is of infinite importance. For, at the moment, whenever it ceases to have any *WILL* of this kind, then it will no longer have any balance of power, relative to any part of futurity. The scale, therefore, will be irreversibly turned; and so turned, as to instantly plunge the soul into a state of irretrievable and endless misery. But as long as the Deity

actually continues to retain the balance, relative to any future volition, it will continue to be true, that it WILL agree with *one* term, and also true, that it CAN agree with the other. And, therefore, as long as it continues to be in a state of liberty, it CAN do, what never WILL, in fact, be done.

Hence it is evident, that the Deity can, by the exertion of his own power, produce all effects, in the material and mental system, including matter and motion; perception and volition; and yet leave finite moral agents in a state of perfect freedom or liberty. It is also evident, that finite free agents are absolutely and intirely dependent on the power of the Deity for all their actions. For it is in the *agreement* of the finite mind with one term of the *Deity's twofold power*, that every moral action of any finite agent wholly consists. Though it is the Deity himself, who, by the exertion of his own power, produces every volition, that ever exists, with respect to the finite mind; yet he never produces this kind of effect, without the particular *free consent* of the mind itself, to which the effect has a peculiar relation. We call it "free consent," because it never is, in any case whatever, the consequence of any previous necessity. If it should be inquired, Whether there is any distinction between *consent* and *choice*? We answer: That there is a perfect distinction. For choice or preference universally consists in *perception*; but *consent* consists in the AGREEMENT of the mind itself with the POSSIBILITY of volition. There is a perfect distinction between *perception* of every kind and MENTAL AGREEMENT. Perception is that kind of existence, which attends the mind; but it is not the mind itself, neither is it any modification or action of the

mind. All perception is properly the effect of some cause, which is perfectly distinct from the mind; and it is always the consequence of some previous necessity. But mental agreement, whether it consists in consent or dissent, is the agreement of the *mind itself* with that possibility, which has a peculiar relation to volition. In this agreement all the ACTION OR ACTIVITY of the mind properly consists. Mental agreement is not the consequence of any previous necessity; nor the effect of any preceding cause; it is, however, infinitely far from being self-existent; for it is absolutely dependent on that two-fold power, with which the Deity has, from all eternity, been invested. But this balance of power, though it is the whole, and the only *foundation* of all mental agreement, yet is not, in the least degree, the *necessitating cause*. For, just as far as a balance of power is retained in the hand of the Deity, all necessity is, from the very nature of the case, intirely excluded, and will not be introduced till the Supreme, Universal Agent sees fit to turn the scale.

Having taken notice of the distinction between mental agreement and perception, it may now be observed, that *volition* is perfectly distinct from them *both*. For *that* does not consist in perception of any kind; not even in choice or preference; but it universally consists in the SEPARATION of *one* kind of perception from its REAL OBJECT. And *that*, which is capable of being thus separated, we have already distinguished from all others, by adopting the term, *volitive perception*, for the purpose of expressing it: and this is intirely distinct from preference or choice. Hence it is evident, that *perception*, *mental agreement*, and *volition*, are all perfectly distinct

from each other. That kind of mental agreement, which we call **CONSENT**, and which consists in the **AGREEMENT** of the **MIND** with the *possibility* of *volition*, is universally the antecedent, of which volition itself is the necessary and immediate consequence, and is that, without which volition will never be introduced. For, though the Deity himself, by the exertion of his own power, produces every volition, yet he never does this without the **FREE CONSENT** of the individual mind, to which the volition belongs. For consent is the *cause*, of which volition is the *effect*: but the Deity never produces any *effect without a cause*.

We have shown that the Deity is invested with a twofold power, relative to all the future volitions, that can belong to any finite mind. Hence the mind itself is naturally in a state of **LIBERTY**, to make an agreement with either term of that twofold power, with which the Deity is invested, and which implies, on each side, an equal possibility. We have also shown, that in the finite mind's **ACTUALLY AGREEING** with either term of this twofold power, all its **MORAL ACTION** universally consists. That kind of mental agreement, which consists in the finite mind's taking that term, which implies a possibility of volition's being present, we have denominated **CONSENT**. We shall now proceed to make some observations, respecting the **RULE**, according to which the mind gives its **CONSENT** to the introduction of volition. This *rule* is the same as what is called *motive* or *choice*.

The term, *motive*, is used in different senses. It is sometimes used to denote the *object* of choice; and sometimes to denote *choice* or *preference itself*. Motive, when it is considered as being the *object*, is the *cause*, of which

choice is the *effect*. Therefore, whenever motive is considered as being distinct from choice; then choice, or preference (which are synonymous terms) is the real *effect*, of which motive is the proper *cause*. And, in this sense, we shall use the term, *motive*. Motives are of an influential nature, and therefore may, in a greater or less degree, be said to be weak or strong. Choice is that kind of perception, which is agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and is an effect, which always has some motive for its cause. Motive and choice stand related, as cause and effect. Motive, therefore, is essential to choice or preference, and is that, without which, choice or preference cannot exist; but volition, and *consent*, which is the *cause* of volition, are each of them perfectly distinct from motive and from choice. For choice is a peculiar kind of perception, consisting in that internal effect, which always has motive, which is something intirely extrinsick to the mind, for its cause. But consent consists in the *agreement* of the mind with the possibility of volition.... Consent, therefore, is not the same as motive nor choice; neither does it consist in the mind itself, absolutely considered, nor in the relation of the mind to perception; but it universally consists, as we have said, in the agreement of the mind with the possibility of its own volition: which agreement is not the consequence of any previous necessity; but is the real and only proper antecedent, of which volition is the necessary consequence. Volition does not consist in perception itself, but in the separation of volitive perception from its real object. And this peculiar kind of *separation*, called *volition*, is the necessary effect or consequence of *consent*: which consent, though it universally presupposes a balance of power, in the

hand of the Deity, yet is never the effect or consequence of any previous necessitating cause.

The way is now prepared for the exhibition of a distinct view of the nature and use of *motives*, so far as they have any relation to the mental system. Consent is always attended with choice or preference, which is produced by some motive. And since *choice* is always an *effect*, which corresponds, or agrees, with some *motive*, as its *cause*, it is not of any essential importance, which of the two terms are used. It may be said, then, that motive or choice is the RULE, according to which the mind always *acts*, whenever it gives its *consent* to the introduction of volition. It must be observed, however, that though the mind, whenever it *does* act, in giving its consent to the introduction of volition, by agreeing with the possibility of it, always acts according to *some rule*, consisting in choice or motive, of a superiour or inferiour kind; yet it is *very far* from being the case, that the mind, when a rule of action is set before it, *always acts* in conformity to the rule, which is thus presented to its view. Motive or choice is never the necessitating cause of consent, any more than a book is the cause of a person's reading; or a road, that leads to some distant place, the cause of his travelling. If a person is presented with a book, he can either read, or forbear to read. Or if a road is laid open before him, he can travel, or forbear to travel. If he has actually begun a journey, he can continue to pursue, or desist from pursuing it. He can follow the direct road, or turn aside into devious paths. So the mind, when any motive is presented, can give its consent or dissent, with respect to the introduction of volition. For though choice, as far as it exists, with rela-

tion to the finite mind, is always an effect, which is introduced by previous necessity ; yet this is never the case, with regard to consent, consisting in that mental agreement, which presupposes a balance of power, implying a twofold possibility, by which all previous necessity is entirely excluded. Between mental agreement and choice there is, as we have observed, a perfect distinction. For choice, being the necessary effect of some motive, as its cause, is a perception, which presents itself to the mind ; but consent consists in the *agreement* of the *mind itself* with the possibility of its own volition. For though the mind, whenever it actually gives its consent to the introduction of volition, always conducts, in thus doing, according to rules of some kind or other, consisting in motives, that ultimately lead to beneficial or hurtful consequences ; yet it is not, in this case, subjected to any necessitating influence, from the rules, which it follows ; any more than a person, who, when he reads, has some book for his guide ; and when he travels, pursues some path. It is to be considered, however, that, as there is a great variety of books, some of which are useful, and others prejudicial ; and likewise, a great variety of paths, some leading to safety and happiness, others to danger and misery ; so there is a multiplicity of *rules* or *motives* presented to the mind. And it may justly give occasion for the deepest regret, that the mind, when the infinitely bountiful Author of all good, by retaining a balance of power, relative to its future volition, has rendered it capable of regulating its *consent*, according to the most important rules, consisting in what may properly be termed the *highest motives*, should, notwithstanding, descend so low, as to follow the direction of those, which are conti-

nually leading it on to consequences of the most destructive nature. Since the mind, in the various instances of its actually consenting to the introduction of volition, always has in view some motive, as a rule of direction, it is, therefore, a consideration of the most interesting nature, that it should, with the most cautious vigilance, and persevering assiduity, improve the most *valuable motives*, with which it is already furnished, or is capable of obtaining. For if it passes heedlessly along, under the deceitful guidance of motives of the lowest order; or such as arise only from objects of sense, and which extend not beyond the narrow limits of the present transitory scene, the time is very short, in which the Supreme Omnipotent Agent will continue to retain, relative to the soul's future volition, that balance of power, on which the whole life of the soul itself intirely depends. For the soul, having the scale, that relates to endless futurity, so turned, as to imply the final loss of all liberty, and consequently, to leave remaining no possibility of volition nor positive perception, will be, at once, involved in a most tremendous state of irrecoverable ruin. But, on the contrary, inconceivably different will be the happy condition of those, who, by special volition, consisting in the exercise of practical faith, have been really united to the glorious and adorable Mediator. For all, of this description, will have, in the hand of him, who is clothed with Omnipotence, the unalterable security of a balance of power, relative to a series of volitions, extending through endless duration. Which volitions will, by the exertion of divine power, be successively introduced, with the *free consent* of the mind, regulated by the direction of motives perfectly pure, superlatively excellent, noble, and

sublime. Those, therefore, who are in this most desirable state, will for ever enjoy all true liberty, to the greatest possible extent, and in the highest degree. And what will render their liberty absolutely complete, and give it the indelible stamp of infinite, unchangeable value, will be the utter impossibility of their sinning.....O ye happy souls! "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John viii. 36.)

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE NATURE AND CONSEQUENCES OF COMMON AND SPECIAL VOLITION.

HAVING taken a view of liberty and moral agency, and considered the nature and use of motives, we shall now proceed to the consideration of volition, the general nature of which, as consisting in the separation of some perception from its real object, has already been incidentally mentioned. It remains now to be observed, That there are two very distinct kinds of volition; viz. common and special. But before we proceed to take a direct view of this distinction, it may be proper to introduce some preliminary remarks.

The object of volition is always the very same, as the real object of volitive perception. Volitive perception (so called because it has a peculiar relation to volition) consists in that kind of perception, that corresponds to any real object, which is of such a nature, as to admit of the *separation* of the correspondent perception from the *object itself*. Here, then, there are two distinct things. First; a *perception* corresponding to some real

object, from which the perception can be separated..... Secondly ; the *actual separation* of the perception itself from its *real object*. The first of these is what we call *volitive perception*, and the other *volition*. Here let it be particularly observed ; that though volition can never be of any greater extent than volitive perception ; yet volitive perception may be, and in numerous instances, actually is, more extensive than volition. For the latter universally presupposes the former ; but the former, simply considered, does not infer the latter. Hence it is often the case, that volitive perception becomes actually present, without being *succeeded* by *volition* ; but *volition* never becomes actually present, without being immediately *preceded* by *volitive perception*. The reason is, because, not only *volitive perception*, but also *CONSENT*, are *both* of them essentially prerequisite to the actual existence of *volition*. For the Deity, the Supreme Universal Agent, who, by the exertion of his own power, produces every effect, never introduces volition, relative to any finite mind, without the previous *free consent*, of the mind itself, to its introduction. Therefore, if any volitive perception, or even choice or preference, resulting from any motive whatever, should, at any time, be actually present, it will not follow, merely from this, that volition will be the consequence. For *consent*, as we have just observed, must always be brought into the account, as being essentially prerequisite to volition. Therefore, the Deity, who regards every thing as being exactly what it is, always does, whenever he exerts his power for the production of volition, have a regard to the *consent* of the individual mind, to which the volition has a peculiar relation. And that he never will produce any volition, with-

out a previous consent of the mind, will be evident to any one, who duly considers the following principles.

1. There is, and always has been, in the hand of the Deity, a balance of power, relative to every future volition, that ever can be present, in any future time, except the time immediately succeeding the present. For, the want of such a balance of power, universally implies the want of a possibility of all future volition.

2. There is an absolute *general* necessity, that the finite mind, having been once actually introduced into existence, should give its actual consent or dissent, respecting the introduction of its own volition, by agreeing with the possibility of its being introduced, or by agreeing with the possibility in the opposite scale. The Deity, as long as he actually retains a balance of power, relative to future volition, leaves the individual mind, to which the volition belongs, perfectly free to take either side, without subjecting it to any, even the least degree of necessity, respecting *which* side, in *particular*, it shall actually take. He does, however, absolutely require, *in general*, that it should take one side or the other. Hence it follows :

3. That if it should not agree with the possibility of volition's being introduced ; then it will agree with the possibility on the opposite side ; and then the Deity will not introduce the volition. Therefore, it follows universally, that the Deity never will introduce any volition without the previous consent of the mind. Hence we may have universal and absolute certainty, with regard to what the Deity will do, and what he will not do, respecting the introduction of volition. For according to the previous free consent of the individual mind, to which

the volition belongs, he will introduce the volition ; but he will not introduce it without such consent. Consequently ; we may know, with full assurance, what we have to depend on, with regard to the conduct of the Supreme Agent, in his dealings with us. He has our eternal destinies, absolutely in his own hand. To him all power belongs, and he is the Universal Cause of every effect. With our CONSENT he will, by the exertion of his own power, produce in us such volitions, as are essentially requisite, in order to infallibly secure the life of our souls, and make us completely happy, in the endless enjoyment of himself. But if we will take the opposite side, and persist in refusing to give our *consent* to his introducing such prerequisite volitions, as are absolutely necessary, in order to our final welfare ; then he will shortly turn the scale against us, in such a manner, as to leave NO POSSIBILITY of *our* having any happyfying connexion with *him*, nor of *his* ever extending to *us* any favourable regard. Hence we may see what infinitely important consequences depend on our consent, or dissent, with respect to the introduction of volition.

We shall now proceed to consider the two distinct kinds of volition, viz. common and special, which have already been mentioned. Common volition always has, for its object, that kind of existence, which is called *voluntary motion* ; which kind of motion is not capable of being communicated to any part of matter, but only the sensorial extremity of the nerves of an animal body. It is by common volition, that this kind of motion is transmitted from the future to the present ; and being thus transmitted, is communicated to the extremity of the nerves ; and then it is, by a mechanical operation transferred, in an external direction, to different parts of the

body, and from thence, to all those surrounding objects, with which the moving parts of the body are immediately connected. All voluntary motion, in the first beginning of it, is perfectly immechanical ; not originating in any present motion, that actually exists, in any part of the material system ; but it flows directly from the future, that inexhaustible fountain of possible existence. We have called the future *an inexhaustible* fountain ; because the Deity, being invested with Omnipotence, has all power ; and that, which, when considered as being in his hand, is called *power*, is, when considered with respect to *particular existence*, the same as *possibility*. And possibility, in its relation to existence, is not confined to present objects, but has a real relation to the future, as well as the present. Hence results a distinction between actual and possible existence. For though all actual existence is possible ; yet all possible existence is not actual. Because *actual* existence includes only what is *present* ; but *possible* existence includes not only that which is present, but also, that which extends forward through *endless futurity*. Therefore, the Deity has, in his own power, all at once, that is, in the present time, not only all the *actual* existence, which immensity contains, but likewise all the *possible* existence, which is contained in a whole eternity. Hence he can transmit, from the future to the present, new existence, and change of existence, in endless succession, and infinite variety. Of what inconceivable importance, then, it is, that the eternal series of effects, resulting from the exertions of his power, should, with respect to us, be on the *favourable* side ! And, that this may be the case, we must take the *right side* of his *power* ; or, which is the same thing, we must

form all our *mental agreements* according to his direction. We have observed : That there is a distinction between possible and actual existence. This remark, however, has a particular reference to the system of *mutable* existence. For, with respect to the immutable system of infinite perfection, the remark will not apply. Because in that glorious system, which essentially belongs to the Deity, and is peculiarly his own, all *possible* existence is perfectly coincident with *actual*. He, therefore, now actually possesses, and will for ever unchangeably possess, the whole absolute sum of all possible good, that immensity and eternity contain : and all this, with respect to him, is infallibly secure.

Voluntary motion, in its origin, is, as we have said, perfectly immechanical. And this is also the case, with respect to all natural motion, or the motion of such revolving bodies as compose a planetary system. For neither of these two species of motion is produced by any kind of impulse, as all mechanical motions are. Both natural and voluntary motion are derived immediately from the future. Their respective causes, however, are perfectly distinct. For the cause of natural motion, according to what has been particularly shown, in a preceding part of this work, is *matter* ; but the cause of voluntary motion is *common volition*. As a prerequisite to this kind of volition, there must be a volitive perception, consisting in an idea of the motion, which is to be introduced. Then, in the *separation* of this idea from its *real object*, the *volition itself* consists. The real object of the idea, in this case, is not *actual*, but it is *possible*, existence ; consisting in a certain degree of motion, which is to be transmitted from the future to the present. In order,

therefore, to have a proper understanding of this subject, and a clear view of what it is, that renders common volition efficacious, the following general principle must be considered with special attention, and the truth of it admitted and retained. The principle is this. All existence, respecting which there is a *possibility* of its being present, is either *actually present* or *future*. Here, then, we have an alternative proposed, which is of such a nature, that if we reject one side, we must unavoidably admit the other. If, therefore, with regard to any existence, respecting which there is a *possibility* of its being present, it should be denied, that it is *actually present*; then it must be admitted, that it is *future*. Consequently, if it should be denied, that it is *future*; then it must be admitted, that it is *present*. That voluntary motion, is something, respecting which there is a *possibility* of its being present, is too plain to admit a doubt. For we have seen, and felt, the invincible evidence of this truth, in more than ten thousand instances. But if there is any one, who, in pretence or reality, is doubtful with regard to its being true, that there is a *possibility* of voluntary motion's being present, he must be given over, as being in a hopeless condition; or dealt with, as the physician would deal with a patient, exhibiting the symptoms of an incurable disease.

The preparatory observations, that have been made, are sufficient to open the way to give a distinct view of the subject, now under consideration; or to show wherein consists the nature, and whence results the efficacy, of common volition, or that, by which voluntary motion is produced. Let it, then, be observed:

First ; that all volition, whether common or special, universally consists in the *separation* of *volitive perception* from its *real object*.

Secondly ; that it is the universal nature of all volition to produce the *want* of its *object*. For, since there is a correspondence or agreement subsisting between volitive perception and its real object, at the time when the volitive perception is actually present ; therefore, when the volitive perception comes to be separated from its real object, then, because an equal will be separated from its equal, nothing will remain. Thus ; let m be the real object of volitive perception ; and let the perception, that agrees with m , be n . Then it is evident, that by the separation of n from m , the WANT of m will be produced. - For since $n=m$; therefore, $m-n=0$. Hence it is evident, that it is the nature of all volition, because it consists in the separation of volitive perception from its real object, to produce the *want* of the object itself.

Now let the preceding principles be applied to common volition, the real object of which is voluntary motion ; and the volitive perception, which corresponds to, or agrees with, this real object, is an *idea* of voluntary motion ; it is an idea, for instance, of the motion of the hands or feet, &c. Now since voluntary motion is an existence, respecting which there is a *possibility* of its being present ; therefore, it is either actually present or future. But, previous to volition, voluntary motion is not actually present. It is evident, therefore, that, previous to volition, voluntary motion is future. But it is the nature of volition to produce the want of its object. As far, therefore, as common volition is admitted, voluntary motion will be *wanting* in the *future*, and consequently

will be *actually present*. Hence it is evident, that the Deity, by producing, according to the previous *consent* of the mind, common volition, transmits a correspondent degree of voluntary motion, from the future to the present. Which motion, being communicated to the internal extremity of the nerves, as the first link of the wonderful chain, is then, by a most curious mechanical process, transferred to different parts of the living machine, and from thence to contiguous objects, in the external system of matter.

The preceding observations, being considered with strict and impartial attention, will open to view an extensive prospect of the reason and foundation of that wonderful and amazing intercourse, which is continually and mutually carried on, between the material and the mental system. The grand instruments, which the Supreme Agent, the Universal Cause of all effects, uses for this purpose, are *motion* and *perception*. That endless diversity of particular existences, which belong to the great Jehovah's universal dominion, are not considered by him as being mere cyphers; neither are they passed by unnoticed and unregarded. But he, who always views every thing as it is, in reality, takes a most exact account of them all, even to the minutest particular, in the various exertions of his power. The mind can give, or withhold, its consent, relative to the introduction of volition; and according to its conduct, in this respect, things will take, one way or the other, a very different, and even an infinitely different, turn. If we consult the historical records of former ages, or take a view of the present state of mankind, and the world, which they inhabit, we shall be presented with an extensive prospect of the amazing

revolutions, that have been produced, and are still taking place, in consequence of those acts of the mind, which have an immediate relation to common volition. Hence we may see the surprising connexion, that subsists, and the wonderful intercourse, which is mutually carried on, between the two distinct worlds of mind and matter.

We have already observed, that all volition consists in the separation of volitive perception from its real object, and that it is the nature of all volition to produce the *want* of its *object*. There is, as we have said before, an essential distinction between common and special volition. The object of the former is *future*, and consists in that kind of *possible existence*, which we call *voluntary motion*; but the object of the latter is *present*, and consists in *possibility itself*, even that POSSIBILITY, which relates to the eternal happiness of the soul, in the future world. Common volition may result in consequences, implying temporal good, or eternal evil; it may preserve or destroy the life of the body, but it has no connexion with the final *welfare* of the *soul*.

But though the effects of common volition, as far as they relate to *real good*, are temporary, all passing away, like the morning dew; yet even this kind of volition, considered with respect to the present state of things, is of a very extensive nature. For, by this, the tongue converses; the feet convey the body from place to place; the hands perform their operations, great in extent, and numberless in variety; books are written and read; knowledge is acquired; societies are formed; food and clothing are provided; the necessities, comforts, and conveniences of life are procured; cities are built; armies are collected, battles fought, and peace restored; useful

machines are constructed; lands are cultivated, and ships are guided across the pathless ocean. But more solemn scenes present themselves to view, and strongly attract the intellectual eye. The mind has not only a relation to the present state of things; but also to another, infinitely more important; of a nature the most permanent, and of duration without end. And this endless state is to receive its whole complexion, of bright or gloomy, from the *actual existence*, or from the *want*, of SPECIAL VOLITION; to the consideration of which we now proceed.

The grand object of special volition is the *absolute possibility* of being eternally happy. This object is *present*, and is the same as that glorious TRUTH, which constitutes the Second of the Three adorable Subsistences, that are essential to the existence, the nature, and the perfections of the Living God. The volitive perception, that corresponds to this object, is *practical faith*. Special volition (according to the definition of volition in general) consists in the separation of the correspondent perception from its real object; or, which is exactly the same thing, it consists in the *exercise* of practical faith.... It is the nature of special volition, as well as that of the other kind, to produce the *want* of its *object*. There is, however, a very remarkable distinction between these two kinds of volition, relative to the manner of their respective operations. For it is the nature of one, to produce an *immediate effect*, according to its degree, whether *that* is great or small; but the other, in case there is only an *imperfect degree* of it, will not produce *any effect*.... It is the nature of it, therefore, either to produce a perfect effect, or no effect at all. And the grand thing to be

done by it is to introduce the *security* of the eternal happiness of the soul. But to speak of a partial or imperfect security is inconsistent. The more *imperfect* the exercises of practical faith are, the greater must be the *number* of those exercises, that they may, in the final result, be effectual. In order that special volition should produce any effect, so as to secure the soul, it must either be *perfect*, at first, or there must be a continued series, till the whole amount becomes the same as *one perfect volition*.... If you inquire, What safety a person can have, while he is engaged in a series of exercises of practical faith, each of which is, when considered by itself, imperfect? The answer is, That he can have no safety, not even in the least degree, till the grand object is *completely* accomplished, and he is actually united, by an indissoluble union, to the glorious Redeemer.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE INFINITE DANGER WHICH ATTENDS THE SOUL, IN THE FIRST STAGE OF ITS EXISTENCE; AND THE ONLY WAY OF ITS ESCAPE.

IN the immutable system of infinite perfection, there are THREE things, which must be strictly observed, and always kept in view. First: there is, in reality, such a thing as BEING *completely and eternally happy*. Secondly: there is ONE POSSIBILITY of *being completely and eternally happy*. Thirdly: there is ANOTHER POSSIBILITY of *being completely and eternally happy*. The two first of these THREE subsist in the *present time*; and the THIRD, in a *future eternity*: and each of them has an

essential relation to the Infinite Mind....THE ONE ONLY LIVING AND TRUE GOD. They are all of the very same value and importance as the ever-blessed Jehovah himself, and are, therefore, infinitely worthy of the *same regard*. These three glorious and adorable SUBSISTENCES have, not only an *essential relation* to the One Supreme Universal Agent, but also, an *actual relation* to finite free agents. There is, also, *one original principle* (in distinction from the THREE, that have already been mentioned) consisting in the possibility of being eternally miserable, which, with all its attendants, is PECULIAR to the mutable system. The first of the three Subsistences we denominate the Father; the second, the Son, the Mediator, the Saviour, or the Redeemer; and the third, the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, or the Comforter. And the original possibility of being eternally miserable, we call the evil spirit, the adversary, the destroyer, or "the POWER OF DARKNESS." (Col. i. 13.) These several things, which have now been mentioned; viz. the three adorable Subsistences, which are *essential* to the Divine Nature; and the possibility of evil, which is *peculiar to the mutable system*; are to be considered, not as mere *abstract entities*, in a metaphysical system of *ontology*, but as *practical principles*....even *fundamental principles of action*, both, in respect to the *Deity*, and also, in respect to the *finite mind*. For it is evident; That neither the finite, nor the Infinite Mind can ACT, without POWER OR POSSIBILITY.

The immutable system of infinite perfection is called "Heaven;" the mutable system, considered as containing the principles of good and evil, is called "earth," "the world," or, "this world;" but, consider-

ed, as containing *no principles*, but only those of *evil*, is called "*hell*." HEAVEN, to which the glorious, and adorable principle of eternal happiness, together with every subordinate principle of good, essentially belongs, is in a state of irreconcilable warfare with the *principle* of eternal misery, and with all its attendant subordinate *principles* of evil ; which *principles* were, before finite agents had formed any connexion with them, *perfectly harmless* ; but now, since a connexion of this kind has, in some instances, been actually formed, they have become *infinitely hurtful* ; and are, therefore, of an intirely *different nature* from what they were, in their *original state*. "And the angels, which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude ver. 6.) "And there was war in heaven ; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him." (Rev. xii. 7, 8, 9.) Hence arises the infinite importance of paying a most serious and seasonable regard to the following exhortation. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood ; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spirtual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day,

and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with TRUTH, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of PEACE; above all, taking the shield of FAITH, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph. vi. 10.....18.)

From the particular observations, which have already been made (chap. iv.) respecting the nature of life and death, in relation to the soul, you may see, at one view, on what its eternal destiny intirely depends. Faith or falsehood will introduce it, and that, within a short time, into a fixed and endless state of happiness or misery..... And now, if you have, in any measure, felt the weight of this most solemn and interesting subject, you cannot remain indifferent, with regard to the all-important inquiry, respecting the present particular state of YOUR OWN SOUL. To such an inquiry we can, at once, give, in positive, absolute terms, a *general* answer. You are *now*, either in a confirmed state of eternal life, or else, in a middle state, between that of eternal life, and that of eternal death. For, if by having experienced the REGENERATING influences of the Holy Spirit, you have actually "passed from death to life;" then the question, not only as it relates, in *general*, to your for ever continuing to exist, in futurity, which was unalterably decided, as soon as you commenced your being, but also, as it has a *spe cia* relation to the *peculiar kind* of existence, which you will,

through a whole eternity, retain, is now brought to a most happy decision ; a decision, which no power, within the utmost extent of the absolute universality of things, can ever reverse. For the possibility of eternal death, and, with that, the possibility of all essential evil, having, from the infinite love of the Father of mercies, through the mediation of the glorious Redeemer, been once removed or destroyed, by the special counteractive influence of the Holy Spirit, can never return. The irreconcilable adversary of your soul has now fallen, never more to rise. And though it may be the case, that in your short journey through the present temporary life, you will meet with some occasional evils ; yet amidst them all, having an indissoluble union with the Mediator, you never can receive any essential harm. And even natural death, the last enemy, which you will ever have to encounter, can do no more than to subject you to a momentary pain. And having, in this last conflict, had all your enemies completely subdued, the bright scenes of eternal glory, spread out into a boundless prospect, perfectly free from all defilement of sin, and every shade of sorrow, will present themselves to your astonished view. Then, blessing the day, in which your infant eyes first opened on the light, you will, with unspeakable joy, adoration, and praise, behold, in a manner, in which you never beheld before, the smiling face of that infinitely amiable Being, who first gave you existence ; and whose friendly hand safely led you on, through the various stages of your introductory state, to those realms of happiness, respecting which, all description fails, and which, imagination itself, has no power to conceive.... But if you have reason to conclude, that the case, which

has now been exhibited, is not applicable to *yourself*; then you must be considered, as actually belonging, at present, to that class, to whom the other part of the general statement will particularly apply. The general statement, you may remember, was this; viz. That you are now, either in a confirmed state of eternal life, or in a middle state, between that of eternal life, and that of eternal death. That you now belong to the number of those, to whom this *general* statement will apply, is evident; because, it is certain, from your being yet an inhabitant of the present world, that you are not now to be numbered with that class, who, having persisted in a course of impenitence and unbelief, to the final close of life, have actually entered into a confirmed state of eternal death. Hence it follows; that if your final destiny, respecting the particular mode of your existence, through endless futurity, has not been already fixed, on the favourable side; then it is *not now* actually fixed, on *either* side; neither on that of *eternal life*, nor that of *eternal death*. And, consequently, you now actually belong to that class, who are in an intermediate state, between the two infinite extremes. And since this is very far from being an uncommon case, we shall now assume it as a statement, and, accordingly, proceed to make some observations on the subject, to which the assumed statement will lead; a subject of the most solemn and interesting importance, to every one, to whom it will particularly apply.

Since this is a subject, in which the life of your soul is immediately concerned, we presume that no reasonable occasion of offence will be given, or can be received, if it should be treated in a way of close application, attended with all that friendly plainness, and benevolent affec-

tion, which its nature and importance justly require..... And the propriety of adopting such a method will evidently appear, when it is considered, that we are now drawing near to the close of that work, some part of which, at least, if not the whole, of what is contained in the preceding pages, you are supposed to have already perused, with candour and careful attention. We shall, therefore, here exhibit to your view the real nature of the *actual state*, to which you now belong, and from which you must, VERY SOON, make a most solemn and a final transition into that of endless life, or endless death, which will be necessarily implied in your future destiny ; to meet which, you are every moment advancing forward, as fast as your precarious life is passing away. And, therefore, of your continuance in your present unsettled condition, in which you are SUSPENDED between the two infinite extremes of eternal happiness and misery, by that BALANCE OF POWER, which yet remains in the hand of HIM, “who is able to *save* and to *destroy*,” “THE TIME IS SHORT.”

With rapid speed the fleeting minutes fly,
And teach this lesson....Mortals, learn to die !
Each beating pulse leads on to certain death ;
And life is shorten'd by each flowing breath.

According to the statement, that has been made, and which is considered as being applicable to *your* particular case, you are now attended with the Mediator ; and you are, also, at the same time, attended with the adversary ; and, therefore, you are in a state of spiritual death, which, in the very nature of it, universally implies a *total destitution* of eternal life, or that, which peculiarly be-

longs to every one, who has, by a living faith, been actually united to the Mediator. Your being thus in a state of spiritual death, does not imply the intire want of *all* life of every kind; for such a supposition would directly contradict the particular statement of your case: but it implies, that you have no SECURITY, and no life, that extends beyond the present transitory scene of things; you have nothing, that has any connexion with *eternal* life. For, without an indissoluble union with the Saviour, there is not any thing whatever, not even *perfect innocence*, that implies any kind of life, but only what is of a *temporary nature*.

In consequence of your having the Redeemer, for your attendant, you are preserved from immediate destruction, and have one kind of life; even that, which, as long as it is actually continued, is of infinite importance; Because it is the foundation, and the only foundation, of your ever obtaining that eternal life, which is now *intirely wanting*. For if you should lose the life, you now possess, or, which implies the same thing, if you should once be forsaken by the Saviour, then, your whole foundation being removed, you would instantly meet with an inevitable, and irrecoverable fall; even beyond the reach of the arm of mercy, and beyond all possible influence of any restoring power. Because the reconciling of contradictions never has been, and never will be, admitted into the boundless system of infinite perfection, nor any system, over which the God of truth presides. And, since it implies an absolute contradiction, that you should ever have any safety, as long as you continue in your present condition; or, which is the same, as long as you are attended with the Saviour, *together with the destroyer*;

you are therefore, every moment, exposed to danger, inconceivably great. And this danger equally attends you, at all times, and in all places, wherever you are, or whatever you do ; even in all your hours of seriousness, or levity ; amidst all the labours, or amusements of the day, and the slumbers of the night. And this danger is of such a nature, that it never can be diminished *gradually*, or by successive degrees. Therefore, through all your devout seasons of hearing, reading, meditation, and prayer ; notwithstanding there being the strictest propriety, and the greatest importance, of your attending, with the most persevering diligence, to exercises of this nature, your danger, till it is intirely removed, remains equally the same. The reason is, because such is the nature of your case, as never to admit any *medium* between infinite danger, and perfect safety. For there is no medium between spiritual death and eternal life. And since your infinite danger results intirely from your being in a state of spiritual death ; it is evident, therefore, that as long as you actually continue in this state, you never can have any security. Consequently, if the time should ever arrive, implying the happy period of your having “ passed from death unto life,” the transition will be, not *gradual*, but *instantaneous* ; that is, you will immediately pass, from your present state of infinite danger, into a perfectly new state of infallible security. And this change is what is called “ the new birth,” or “ regeneration,” without which none can enter into the kingdom of heaven. And, being once introduced into this new state, there will, in the very nature of the case, be implied an absolute impossibility of your ever falling away. Having eaten of the bread, and drunk of the water, of life, you can never

perish by hunger nor thirst. (John iv. 14. vi. 51.) But we must return to the consideration of your present, actual state, in order to point out the only way of your escaping from that infinite danger, to which you are now, every moment, in all situations, whether of action or of rest, most imminently exposed. For there really is, according to the present state of the case, a way for your escape, and something for you immediately to do, even amidst all the infinite danger, in which you are now involved. Consequently, there is a proper foundation for making to you, considered as being in that *very state*, in which you now actually are, a rational address, with regard to this inexpressibly important, and inconceivably interesting subject. And *you* also, notwithstanding your now actually being totally destitute of that life, which a union with the Mediator implies, yet are still a moral agent, and have a foundation of obtaining that kind of life, which is now intirely wanting.

You are, as we have said, in a state of “spiritual death;” and we have made use of this *complex term*; because no one *simple term*, expressive of the same thing, is to be found in the language. Notwithstanding this, however, it will not be difficult to give you a clear and definite explanation of the term, according to the uniform sense, in which we always mean to use it. By your being in a state of spiritual death, then, is always to be understood, your being actually attended with the original principle of all esential evil, consisting in the *possibility* of being eternally miserable. No evil is ever implied in this original principle, considered absolutely in itself; but it is in the *agreement* of the finite mind with this *principle*, that *evil itself* universally originates. And, for the pur-

pose of expressing this AGREEMENT, we have a simple, definite term, viz. the term, SIN ; which universally consists in “ the transgression of the law,” that strictly and absolutely prohibits all agreement of the finite mind with any possibility of evil.

The original principle of good, consisting in the *possibility* of being eternally happy, is the whole foundation of all the happiness, in the universal system. And not only so, but this principle, considered in itself, is infinitely valuable and important. The principle of evil belongs only to the mutable system ; for it is such, in its own essential nature, that it must necessarily be eternally excluded from the immutable system of infinite perfection. But the original principle of good, consisting in the present absolute possibility of being eternally happy, is essential to the immutable system, and extends also to that system, to which finite free agents, in the first stage of their existence, belong. This principle, therefore, is not only essential to the existence, the nature, and the perfections of the one only living and true God, and consequently is supremely worthy of the same regard as the Deity himself, but it is also the universal, and the only Medium, through which the infinitely benevolent Parent communicates all the good, both common and special, that finite beings ever enjoy.

From what has been observed, you may see the essential and universal distinction between the original principles of *good* and *evil*. By the *former*, the God of LOVE confers all the GOOD, and by the *latter*, the God of VENGEANCE inflicts all the EVIL, that finite beings enjoy or endure, in being happy or miserable. And here, by the God of *love* and the God of *vengeance*, is to be under-

stood the ONE eternal Jehovah, in different ways exerting his own power, according as the moral actions of finite agents, in HIS estimation, whose judgment is absolutely impartial, properly require. Which moral actions, though they are never the effect or consequence of any preceding cause, yet always have their whole foundation in the original principles of good and evil. And these original principles consist in that twofold power, with which HE is invested, who sustains the character of being the "one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy." (Jam. iv. 12.)

If you have paid any proper attention to the preceding remarks, you will readily see the awful danger, in which you are now involved, and the only way of your escape. You are, on one side, attended with the adversary, and are, thereby, intirely prevented from having the least degree of safety. You are, at the same time, attended, on the other side, with the Mediator, whereby you are preserved from immediate, irrecoverable ruin, and have a complete foundation for obtaining infallible and eternal security. Thus stands your case, at present; but this state of the case is not long to continue. The irrevocable decision of your final destiny is near at hand. For soon.....very soon, you will, by the effectual exercise of practical faith, have such efficacious influence of the Holy Spirit, as to for ever destroy the adversary, with relation to yourself; in consequence of which you will have an indissoluble union with the Mediator; and thus be unalterably confirmed in a state of eternal life: Or, on the contrary, sin, while it continues to be in league with the adversary, will finish its work, by introducing a perfect degree of falsehood; in which case, you will be in-

tirely forsaken by the Saviour, and, consequently, be forever left with the destroyer, and thus be unalterably confirmed in a state of eternal death. And even *now*, while you are thinking on this awful subject, and deliberating on what is to be done, in this infinitely important affair.... while you are raising difficulties, or entertaining doubts, with regard to the question, Whether *you* have any thing to do; or whether any thing by you *can* be done? you are, with all the speed, with which your moments fly, continually advancing forward to meet the solemn crisis. And there is, every moment, as long as the adversary is present, infinite danger of your being forever *forsaken* by the *Mediator*; and being thus once forsaken, your final ruin will then instantly become inevitable. The Redeemer will, indeed, continue to attend you, as long as the nature of your case will admit; but then it must be considered, that the state of your case may be so altered, and that very soon, as to render it necessary for him to depart from you, never more to return. If you inquire, What danger there is of this? We answer: That if sin, while continuing to be in league with the destroyer, should only once introduce a perfect degree of falsehood (and it is now possible, that this may, at any time, be the case) then his dominion over you, the very nature of which is to be established by falsehood, will become unalterably confirmed. And when you are once brought to meet this tremendous crisis, all your strength will utterly fail..... your heart cannot endure, nor your hands be strong, to resist this terrible visitation of divine vengeance. For the very nature of your case will then absolutely require, that you should be totally and eternally abandoned by "the Father of mercies," and consequently, that the Saviour, who at-

tended you before, and warded off the threatened blow, should take his final departure, leaving you with the destroyer alone, to wear out an endless existence, in a state of hopeless misery; continually increasing by progressive degress, in proportion as past time is for ever extending its line of duration, so as to become equal to that, which measures a future eternity.

From what has been observed, you may see the reason, even that reason, which is founded in the very *nature* of things, why it is, that you must always continue to be in a state of equal, infinite danger, as long as the adversary remains present. You never can, therefore, have any safety, till he is destroyed. But this can never be done, but only by the efficacious, counteractive influence of the Holy Spirit. But this counteractive influence is not now *present*, but is *future*, residing with "the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth ETERNITY," and can never be transmitted from the future to the present, as long as the Mediator continues to be *present with the adversary*. There is no possible way, therefore, to procure your safety, but only for the Mediator to DEPART, so as to RETURN AGAIN in the Holy Spirit, that thus the adversary may be destroyed. For, though the Mediator is now your attendant, and constantly preserves you from immediately falling into a state of irretrievable ruin, and is the only foundation of your being secured against such an inconceivably dreadful fall, and of your being introduced into a state of perfect happiness, and eternal safety; yet since you have no actual union, nor any special connexion, with him, you are, therefore, in infinite danger, every day, hour, and minute, of your precarious life, of being intirely and for ever FORSAKEN by him. For you

are also actually attended by the adversary, who is waiting only for sin to introduce, into your mind, a perfect degree of falsehood, in order to have his dominion over you unalterably confirmed. And should this event, replete with unspeakable horror, be once actually realized, and there is nothing, in the ordinary course of things, to render it impossible, nor, in any degree, improbable ; then the Redeemer, having lengthened out his continued attendance with you, to the utmost extent of all possibility, relating to the nature of *your particular case*, will take his final departure, never, through endless futurity, to return any more.

Such, as has now been described, is your present situation, and such is the infinite danger, to which you are continually exposed. Now what you want, what your case most urgently requires, and that, on which the life of your soul, for a whole eternity, intirely depends, is the efficacious, all conquering influence of the Holy Spirit to destroy that irreconcilable adversary, that now attends you, and is waiting for nothing but only for sin to finish its work, by introducing a perfect degree of falsehood, in order to ensure your complete ruin, in a state of interminable wo. Certainly, therefore, of all the inquiries, that you will ever be capable of making, in time or eternity, the one, respecting the *WAY*, whereby that sacred influence, of which you now stand in infinite need, can be obtained, is the most important.

Now, since this sanctifying, saving influence, according to what has already been shown, can never be actually granted, as long as the Saviour continues to attend you, *at the same time with the destroyer* ; therefore, you must have that *SPECIAL VOLITION*, by which the Saviour will

be removed....will fall, or, as it may be said, will die.... Then, the Saviour, thus falling....thus dying, will actually rise again....will really revive, in that very influence, which may, in this way, and never can, in any other way, be transmitted from the future to the present. This being done, the destroyer will finally fall to rise no more; and therefore, the whole foundation for sin to ruin your soul, will be for ever overthrown. Consequently, by having, with the Saviour, a happy, vital union, which never can be dissolved, you will be in a confirmed state of eternal life, and thus be infallibly secured from that tremendous state of endless misery, to which you are *now*, every moment, most imminently exposed. And should it be your inexpressibly happy lot, only once to experience this glorious, this infinitely important event; then all the changes, that can take place, in the present or the future, will never be able to separate you from the love of God. And should this divine love be attended with such *evidence*, in your own mind, as the nature of the case admits, and properly requires; then, while you are passing through the varying scenes of the present life, and all, which are to follow, in endless succession, praise will be your delightful employ.

In praise you'll spend your mortal breath,

"And when your voice is lost in death,

"Praise will employ your nobler powers ;

"Your days of praise will ne'er be past,

"While life and thought and being last ;

"Or immortality endures."

WATTS.

But from this pleasing prospect, now existing only in possibility, we must return to the consideration of your present actual condition. You have not yet passed over

the line, which now separates you from your final destinyeven that destiny, which involves, on one side, all the happiness, that can possibly be enjoyed, in the blissful realms of eternal day ; or, on the other, all the misery, that can possibly be suffered, in the dark and dismal mansions of endless night.

You now want information, respecting what is to be done by the SUPREME AGENT, and what you have to do, in order to be conducted across, in safety, so as to find a fixed residence, for eternity, on the happy side..... But it must be considered, that *information* alone, even though the greatest degree of *speculative knowledge* should thereby be conveyed to your mind, will be intirely insufficient. The grand *experiment* must be made, by fervent PRAYER, consisting in the exercise, and the *repeated, persevering* exercises, of practical faith, in the glorious and adorable Redeemer.

To the Deity belongs all power ; and to him, likewise, all exertion of power belongs. It is he, who, by the exertion of his own power, produces every effect, both in the external and internal system ; whether the effect consists in matter or motion, perception or volition. You are not, therefore, to suppose, that you have a particular power, exclusively belonging to yourself ; consisting in something distinct and separate from the power of the Deity. Notwithstanding this, however, you are a *free agent* ; and your moral action consists, not in the exertion of any power, peculiarly your own, but in your AGREEMENT with one term, or the other, of that two-fold power, with which the Deity himself has been eternally invested. Though it is he, who produces all your volitions ; yet he never produces any effect of this

kind, without your own previous free consent, consisting in the agreement of your own mind with that term of his twofold power, which has a special relation to the volition, which is to be produced. This free consent of yours is such, in the very nature of it, that it never can be considered, as being the consequence, or effect, of any particular previous necessity. For, it always presupposes a balance of power, in the hand of the Deity; and while he retains such a balance, necessity is, from the very nature of the case, intirely excluded. For when the Deity, by the exertion of his power, actually turns the scale, it is *then*, but not *before*, that he introduces *necessity*. Hence it follows; that you must be considered, as being justly accountable for all the consequences of the actual existence, or the want of the existence, of your own volitions.

If you should inquire, What is to be done, or what *you* have to do, in order to your *consenting* to volition's being introduced, by the exertion of divine power? The answer will be, That there is not any thing whatever to be *previously done*; there is not any power whatever to be *previously exerted*. We do not say, that you have nothing to do; for this is not the case. There is something for *you to do*, and something that you *must* do; that is, you must give your consent or dissent, respecting the introduction of volition. Since you are already in a state of actual existence, it has now become too late for you to say, that you will have nothing to do with the power of the Deity. For there is now an absolute and unavoidable necessity, *in general*, that you should actually agree, on one side or the other, with that power of the Deity, which relates to your own volition. And it is a

matter of the greatest importance, that you should do this, not merely in some way or other, without regarding whether it is right or wrong ; but that you should do it, strictly according to his direction, and leave it wholly with him to exert his own power, in the production of all effects, and all consequences, just as he sees fit. For, as we observed before, all exertion of power, and the production of every effect, belongs to him, and to him alone.

But you may, perhaps, even after all, that has been said, still entertain a secret thought, that some *power* must be *exerted*...that some *effect* must be produced, *in order to prepare the way* for your actually doing what you are required to do. Let it be remembered, then, and always kept in view, that it is not any *effect*, resulting from the *previous exertion* of power ; but it is the *very power itself*, that the Deity originally possessed, and has retained, from all eternity to the present moment, with which, as the very *first* thing to be done, you are to *agree*. And that you will, in some way or other, agree with the power of the Deity, is absolutely certain ; but the grand, the all-important inquiry is, *How* you shall do it ? To this inquiry there is but only one proper answer, that can possibly be given, and that is this : That you should do it according to his direction ; that you should take the *right* side, and not the *wrong*. But if, contrary to his express command, you should take the *wrong* side ; then, since you are, at all times, absolutely in his hand, he has full power to make you answerable, and most certainly will make you answerable, for all the dreadful consequences. But if, before all your liberty is irrecoverably lost, you should yield a sincere and effectual obedience to that “one Lawgiver, who is able to *SAVE* and to *DESTROY*,” by taking the *right*

side of his twofold power, as it relates to endless futurity ; then your liberty will, by him, be unalterably confirmed, and he will, by the continual exertion of his own power, produce in you such volitions, as are essentially requisite to open the way for an eternal series of the most happying influences of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, “consider diligently what is before you.” (Prov. xxiii. 1.) “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God, who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Phil. ii. 12, 13.)

Special volition, which consists in the exercise of practical faith, and on the actual existence of which your eternal salvation intirely depends, is, of all others, the most important. There is, as we have already observed, an essential distinction between common and special volition. It is the nature of the former to produce an immediate effect, just according to its *degree*, whether that is great or small ; but any imperfect degree *alone*, of the latter will be intirely ineffectual. It is by special volition, and by that alone, that the saving influence of the Holy Spirit is to be transmitted from the future to the present. But then it must be remembered, that nothing less than a *perfect degree*, or what, on the whole, amounts to a perfect degree, of special volition, will eventually be of any effect. The reason is, because there is no medium between a state of spiritual death, and that of eternal life. Hence it follows ; that there is no way of having your danger diminished, in the least degree, without having it perfectly removed. If you are sailing on the ocean, in a leaky vessel, you can have no safety, till you actually reach the shore :

The Deity has only one way to bestow salvation. And with regard to this, HE has a work, which is *peculiarly his own*. He has also prescribed a course for *you* to take : and to you he has assigned *your own proper work*, no part of which can be performed by *him*. Not because he is defective in power ; but because his infinite perfection absolutely excludes the possibility of his having any thing to do with contradictions, to which Omnipotence itself has no relation. The Deity has never prescribed any course of action for *you* to perform, that properly belongs to *himself*. Utterly vain, therefore, must be any expectation, that he will finish, what *you* leave undone, and that he will, notwithstanding your disobedience or neglect, produce the same train of consequences, as he would produce, if you followed his direction, and duly performed the work which he has assigned you to perform. It is as much impossible, because it equally implies a contradiction, for him to perform any moral action, which belongs to a finite free agent to perform, as it is for him to be changed from a Being of infinite perfection, and actually become a finite free agent himself. It belongs to the Deity, by the actual exertion of his own power, to produce every effect, that ever is produced. But the moral action of a finite mind is not an *effect*, resulting from the *exertion* of power, but it consists in the *agreement* of the finite mind with that *very power itself*, with which the Deity has always been invested. It is inconsistent to suppose, That the Divine Mind should, at any one time, agree with any power, with which it never had any previous agreement ; because it has always had an agreement with *all* power. But the case, with respect to the finite mind, is essentially different ; for that can agree, in

some future time, with one term of the Deity's twofold power, with which it never had any agreement before ; whereas the Divine Mind now actually agrees with all the power, with which it ever can agree. Hence it follows : that every moral action of a finite mind is something, that *peculiarly belongs* to the *finite mind itself* ; and therefore, the action is of such a nature, as to render it as inconsistent to suppose, that it should be performed by the Deity ; as it is, that the Deity himself should be a *finite* moral agent. To you, as a finite agent, it peculiarly belongs to agree, in some future time, with one term of the Deity's twofold power, with which you never had any agreement before ; and it peculiarly belongs to him, as the Supreme, Universal Agent, to remit, at the time of your agreement, the opposite term, which, previous to the given time, he had, from all eternity retained.

Hence you may see, that there is something, which peculiarly belongs to finite agents to perform, as a condition of salvation ; a condition, which cannot be dispensed with, on any account whatever. The Deity never does, in any instance, require of finite agents the performance of any condition, but only what properly belongs to them, and which does not, and on account of his own infinite, immutable perfection, cannot, belong to himself. You may see, then, that there is something for you to do. And the grand, the all-important thing that you have to do, is what has a direct and immediate relation to special volition ; what has a direct relation to this, therefore, is the great work, which you have to perform ; and this is your very *first* and *immediate* work. And now if you inquire, as the Jews once did, What you shall do, that

you might work the works of God? the same answer must be returned to you, as that, which was given to them. "This is the work of God, that you believe on him, whom he hath sent." (John vi. 28, 29.)

"The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," has sent the Mediator to attend you, and he is, even now, your immediate attendant; otherwise, you would not be in a land of hope, and in that state of life and liberty, which you now enjoy; but you would, instead of this, be even now unalterably confined, in the dark and dreary regions of endless despair. And since the Saviour, who is the grand Object of all practical faith, is present with you, and, by being present, prevents the Destroyer, who is also your attendant, from involving you in immediate destruction; therefore, you may have "a very present help in trouble." (Psal. lx. 1.) You are not required to look abroad in search of foreign assistance. "But the righteousness, which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above;) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." (Rom. x. 6.) You may see, then, the great work you have before you; a work, which has a direct relation to special volition, which volition is, as we have said, the same as the exercise of practical faith. Therefore, "Come; for ALL things are NOW READY." (Luke xiv. 17.) You may, perhaps, be ready to say; That being now actually in an unrenewed state, or in a state of spiritual death, you are intirely destitute of eternal life; and, therefore, that you

never can have any degree of true practical faith, till you are actually renewed or regenerated.....The *first* part of your statement ; “ That, being unrenewed you are intirely destitute of eternal life,” we shall readily admit ; because it is evidently true.....it is a most serious and awful fact. But the *second* part, which is supposed to be a consequence, deducible from the *first* ; “ That, being destitute of eternal life, you can have no degree of true practical faith,” will not bear the test of strict and impartial examination. For, if this consequence should be admitted ; then the grand inquiry will be : In what way is that eternal life, which is now intirely wanting, ever to be obtained ?....In what way is that infinite danger, to which you are now, every moment, imminently exposed, ever to be avoided ; Not by faith ; for *that*, according to your statement, is to be wholly left out of the account, as a *prerequisite*, and is only to be brought in, as a *consequence*, of your actually obtaining that life and safety, which is now intirely wanting. Look at your own case, with this statement in view. You are now unregenerate ; and are, therefore, intirely destitute of all life, that relates to endless futurity. And, leaving faith out of the account, which is done in your statement, there is no possible way in the universal nature of things, in which you can ever be saved from that danger of eternal death, into which you are now continually liable to fall. For, without faith, even Omnipotence cannot save you ; because Omnipotence admits no power of reconciling contradictions. But, perhaps, you will say, That you do not mean to leave faith finally out of the account ; you are ready to grant, that faith is essential to salvation. But then, you cannot be the subject of *any degree* of true practical

faith, without first having eternal life. But according to this statement of the case, you do, in reality, effectually leave faith out of the account, as being the way, by which you are to be renewed. For, according to this, you have nothing to do, in order to escape that infinite danger, to which you are continually exposed, but only to wait, till your danger is actually removed, and *then begin* to do that, which is *now first* to be done, in order to escape your danger. This is certainly a direct inversion of that order of things, which the Deity has established, and is inconsistent with that plan of operation, from which he will never vary. Though it is he, that produces every volition ; yet he always requires the previous CONSENT of the finite mind, as an essential PREREQUISITE. But your situation is too critical, and your time too precious to admit any longer disputation in a case so plain. The short opportunity, therefore, which yet remains, must be improved for the purpose of solemnly reminding you, That you have, even now, an infinitely important work before you. It is a business, “that demands dispatch.” From the critical nature of your case, it is something, which most urgently requires your IMMEDIATE attention. And considering the present *possibility* of its being done ; because the SAVIOUR is now your attendant ; together with the infinite *danger*, to which you are exposed, on account of the DESTROYER’s being also present ;

There is enough to make your “ hopes and fears
“ Start up alarm’d, and o’er life’s narrow verge
“ Look down.....On what? A fathomless abyss ;
“ A dread ETERNITY !”.....Soon to be yours !

The great work, you have to do, and in which it is of the utmost importance, that you should be *immediately* engaged, is that, which has a direct relation to SPECIAL VOLITION, which, as we have said, is the very same, as the *exercise* of true practical faith. And this kind of *exercise* is essentially requisite, in order that the Mediator may SO DEPART as to RETURN again, in the Holy Spirit, that the adversary may fall to rise no more, and the league of SIN be utterly broken, by having its whole foundation, to ruin your soul, for ever removed.

Though falsehood, to a very lamentable and alarming degree, even far beyond that, of which you have any proper, adequate conception, has already taken possession of your mind, and is continually gathering new strength; yet this dreadful disease of your soul has not formed its final crisis; it has not intirely extinguished the light of life; but even now, the glimmering “lamp holds out to burn.” For sin has not yet finished its last work, by reinforcing the adversary, with that perfect degree of falsehood, by which his dominion over you, would, if this was actually the case, be unalterably established; and therefore you, being utterly abandoned by the Mediator, would, instead of being an inhabitant of the present world, where hope, of some kind or other, is your continual support, be involved in all the horrors of endless darkness, and reduced to a state of eternal despair. But you are still alive; and though the pulse of life is very faint, and there is, every moment, continual danger, too great to be expressed or conceived, of its beating its last stroke; yet you have, in this most critical situation, the Saviour for your attendant, who “will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.”

(Math. xii. 20.) Notwithstanding this, however, being unrenewed, you are, at present, totally destitute of eternal life, and therefore, have no security against for ever losing your soul, by an irrecoverable fall into a state of eternal death. And if you should once lose your soul, not the wealth of a world, nor that of all the worlds, of which the universe is composed, could ever procure its redemption. Herein, therefore, consists your infinite danger. You are continually liable to be finally and for ever forsaken by the Redeemer; because you have never yet formed with him any vital, indissoluble union. It is indeed true, that as long as he remains with you, there is a foundation for true practical faith. But there is one most important consideration, which you must always steadily keep in view; which is this; That no imperfect exercise of faith, *considered by itself alone*, has any connexion with eternal life. Hence, if you have any one exercise, or even any number of exercises, even of true practical faith, which, in the whole, amount only to an imperfect degree; then this alone, without any thing more, will be intirely ineffectual. There must be a perfect exercise, or a progressive series of exercises, amounting in the whole to a perfect exercise, otherwise it will all, in the final result, be of no effect. "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with ALL YOUR HEART." (Jer. xxix. 12, 13.)

It is worthy of special observation: That there is a distinction between *true* practical faith, and that which is of a *saving* nature. For, though the *latter* always implies the former; yet the former does not universally imply

the latter. Hence it is, that there may be some degree, that is, an imperfect degree of *true* practical faith, previous to the actual renovation of the soul, by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, it may, with the strictest propriety, be said : That there is a PREPARATORY WORK, which even *previous* to regeneration, it belongs to the unregenerate sinner to perform. Respecting this preparatory work, however, it must always be remembered : That whatever advances are made, it will, if it should be left *unfinished*, be just the same, in the *final result*, as if *nothing* had been done.... For, in order to a *saving vital* union with the Saviour, nothing less than one instantaneous exercise of a perfect degree of practical faith, or else such a gradual series of progressive exercises, as will, in the whole, amount to the same, can ever be of any avail, in *securing* the soul from final ruin. The reason is ; because, in the very nature of things, it is impossible, that there should be any, even the least, degree of *security*, without a *perfect* degree. And therefore, *regeneration*, whenever it actually takes place, is absolutely *instantaneous*. Consequently ; the soul can never be *renewed*, in *any measure*, till it is *wholly renewed*.

And now, you may possibly be ready to think, that, if it is really the case, that you can be the subject of any degree of true practical faith, even previous to your being actually regenerated ; then it will not be very difficult for you to accomplish the work, which you have to perform. It may, however, be much more difficult, than what you would, on a superficial view, be apt to imagine. It may be, that you have hitherto remained, in a great measure, a stranger to your own heart. Falsehood is of

a very deceitful nature ; a very large share of it, therefore, may possess the mind, and yet, on account of that counteractive perception, consisting in speculative belief, of which we have spoken before, give it but very little immediate disturbance. And, this being the case, it is very often admitted as a harmless guest, and finds a quiet residence in the heart, even while it is continually doing incalculable injury, by perverting the truth, and thereby depriving the mind of that practical belief, which it would otherwise possess. Falsehood and practical faith are perfectly inconsistent with each other. In the same proportion, therefore, as the former prevails, the latter will be suppressed. But the case, with respect to speculative, or counteractive belief, is essentially different. For this may co-exist with a very great degree of falsehood..... Here, then, there is the greatest danger of your being deceived. For, if your mind was intirely divested of that speculative belief, which is now, by its counteractive influence, constantly contributing to your support ; you would, then, very sensibly feel the unrestrained operation of falsehood, producing uneasiness, anxiety, and distress. A person may, by some artificial means, palliate, in a great measure, a deep-rooted bodily disorder, with which he is affected, without making but little use of any genuine remedy, which is calculated to remove the radical cause. And this may be *your* case, in respect to your *mind*. While you are continually deriving a temporary support, from a variety of surrounding objects, on which you are placing your dependence, you may imagine yourself to be in a state of spiritual health ; or, that you have nothing worse to apprehend, than only a very slight disease ; while, at the same time, you are, in reality, how-

ever insensible you may be of it yourself, attended with the most dangerous symptoms.

But if you think, that you can, without any difficulty, accomplish the great work, which is absolutely requisite to be performed, in order to your being renewed, and having that indissoluble union with the Redeemer, by which alone you can have any title to eternal life, or be secured, in any degree, from that eternal death, to which you are now continually exposed ; then, there is no better way, and, indeed, no other effectual way, for you to have your mind impressed with a proper conviction, relative to the true nature of the case, than only that, which consists in your actually making the *experimental trial*. And it is a matter of the utmost importance, that this trial should be *immediately begun*, and, without intermission, *pursued*, till, by the special, efficacious influence of the Holy Spirit, you become actually united to the Mediator, in a union, that can never be dissolved. And, from first to last, it must always be remembered ; That, after all your exercises, and amidst all your varying circumstances, whatever they may be, you never can, on any consideration, have any safety, till your case is really brought to this happy result. Always keep in view, then, the solemn consideration ; That the distance, which now separates you from that awful line, which forms the boundary between your *temporary*, and your *eternal* state, is very short, and is, every moment, growing shorter still. Therefore ;

“ Be wise to-day ; ’tis madness to defer ;

“ Next day the fatal precedent will plead ;

“ Thus on, till wisdom is push’d out of life.

“ Procrastination is the thief of time

“ Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
 “ And to the mercies of a moment leaves
 “ The vast concerns of an eternal scene.

YOUNG.

Rest not, till your great work is done ;
 The present hour may be the last ;
 “ Seize the salvation ere ’tis past,
 “ Nor mourn the blessing gone.
 “ A SHORT DELAY is ruin here ;
 “ A closing eye, a gasping breath,
 “ Shuts up the golden scene in death,
 “ And drowns you in despair.”

Therefore, by the immediate, and the continued exercise of practical faith, prepare to meet your God, in such a manner, that you may be admitted to dwell in his happy presence for ever, when you have made, what you must very soon actually make, that most solemn experiment of exchanging your *temporary*, for your *ETERNAL* state.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE DEATH OF THE BODY, AND THE FINAL TRANSITION OF THE SOUL FROM TIME TO ETERNITY.

HAVING investigated the grand, original principles, which constitute a system of the most *interesting practical* importance to all perceptive beings, who yet retain a capacity of being happy ; or, who have not intirely lost their only Saviour ; we shall now look forward to the final termination of the present life....even to the awful borders of the visible, and invisible world. Respecting which

we shall, for the purpose of briefly disclosing the astonishing prospect of those ultimate consequences, which result from the leading principles, that compose the system, which has, in the preceding pages, been already exhibited, draw aside the intervening vail. And, having taken a general view of those two amazing states of endless happiness and misery, on the other side of that irrepassable line, which divides TIME from ETERNITY, we shall then bring the contents of this volume (the product of many a serious hour) to a solemn close.

We shall, first, while sin is hastening to finish its work, by introducing such a degree of falsehood, as to dissolve the vital union, accompany the *body*, in its short journey to the grave; and then attend the *soul* to its final residence, in that eternal state, from which there is no return.

The greatest possible sum of real good, with the intire exemption from every evil, was perfectly consistent with the original constitution of things; and might have been for ever enjoyed by all perceptive beings; had not finite free agents, by their lawless conduct, interrupted the glorious harmony, and prevented the happy intercourse, which would, otherwise, have universally subsisted between the mutable system of finite existence, and the immutable system of infinite perfection. But now "is the gold become dim," and "the most fine gold changed." (Lam. iv. 1.) For SIN, consisting in the transgression of that divine law, by which all finite free agents are absolutely prohibited from having any connexion with the original principle of evil; that is, the *destroyer*; or, the Deity's *destroying power*, is performing a series of operations, by introducing into the internal state of things, that *falsehood*, which, by progressive degrees, is continu-

ally preparing the way for NATURAL DEATH; consisting in the intire derangement, and the total disorder of that most wonderful composition of organized matter, through the instrumentality of which, previous to this awful event, a mutual intercourse, or correspondence, is carried on between the mental and the material system. It is "sin when it is FINISHED," that "bringeth forth DEATH." For even after it has *begun* to operate, it does not, all at once accomplish its *whole* work, on account of various temporary causes, both in the external and internal system, by the counteractive influence of which, it is, in some degree, and during some interval of time, impeded in its progress. But, at length, all counteractive influence intirely fails.....Then actually arrives the solemn crisis.... when the soul, unalterably destined to an eternal state of weal or wo, can no longer be a tenant of that mortal body, respecting which, no light can now enter the eye.... no sound salute the ear.....nor breath expand the lungs..... the circulating blood, meeting with a total obstruction, in every part, intirely ceases to flow.....the heart beats no more.....

Thus, that wonderful composition, resulting from the peculiarly refined modification of material substance, more curiously wrought, and more highly finished, than all the other works of the great Creator, in the present world of matter, is wholly laid in ruins, and mingled with the common dust. But the SOUL, being of an essentially different *nature*, and not consisting of matter nor motion, either separate or combined, or modified in any possible way whatever, still retains, and will for ever continue to retain, its own conscious existence and personal idendity. *Destruction*, therefore, whenever it is mentioned with

reference to the mind, universally implies the intire loss of its *life*, and not the dissolution of its *existence*. The *body* being consigned to its lonely mansion in the silent tomb, we shall now proceed to a brief consideration of the final state of the *soul*; after having introduced a few preliminary observations, respecting the propriety and importance of the use of figurative language on this solemn subject; in order that *reason* and *imagination* may always *both* conspire, with united force, in every attempt, which is made to form a *true estimate* of the awful realities of endless futurity.

From some of the figurative representations, that are given, respecting the general resurrection, the last judgment, and the final retribution of rewards and punishments, the inattentive reader of the sacred scriptures may be in danger of being misled, by understanding that, in a literal sense, which, according to the strict truth and reality of things, far surpasses any literal description, that can ever be conveyed to the mind, in its present imperfect state. With regard to objects, that relate to the present world, descriptions may rise so high, as to exceed the bounds of the actual truth and literal reality of the objects described; and thus be the occasion of exciting groundless hopes or fears. Imagination, in this case, directing its views to the bright or the gloomy side, may extend beyond its proper sphere. But the case is essentially different, as it relates to those most solemn, and all important scenes, which endless futurity is to successively unfold to the conscious mind. For here imagination may, and ought, to exert itself to the utmost of its strength. While, at the same time, it should be the business of reason, not to give any check to the mind,

thus endeavouring to enlarge its ideas, but, on the contrary, to sanction the conclusion, That, even imagination itself, in its boldest flights, is far, inconceivably far, from having a full view of the real magnitude of its object, in its true extent. This is the reason, therefore, why *figurative* representations are often given, in order to communicate ideas, respecting those realities, for the purpose of expressing which, all *literal* descriptions are intirely inadequate. Though, while looking at those temporal objects, which actually are, or have been, visible to the natural eye, it is, many times, the proper office of reason to restrain the imagination, in order to prevent it from transgressing its due bounds; yet, in contemplating the eternal realities of futurity, both reason and imagination may jointly conspire to contribute to each other their mutual assistance, for the purpose of presenting the mind with the most extensive conceptions, without any danger of ever exceeding the bounds of the truth and reality of the objects, to which they relate. The representations, that are given in the sacred writings, relative to the general resurrection, the final judgment, the irreversible sentence, which is to be passed on the righteous and the wicked, and the respective places of their final residence, in complete happiness or perfect misery, are most solemn and affecting. And it does not belong to reason, in this case, to restrain the imagination, and damp its ardour, by confining all those representations to their strict, *literal* sense; and then, from the supposed inconsistencies, implied in them, to draw the rash conclusion, That they are all merely visionary, vain, and delusive. But it is the grand business, of reason, in this case, to assist the imagination, and strengthen it with the

assurance, that all those representations are most strictly true, in *reality*; and, if they are not, respecting every circumstance, *literally* true, it is because they do, taken merely in a literal sense, fall below, very far below, the real truth of their respective objects. For it must be adopted, as a fundamental principle; That all which is said, or ever can be imagined, relative to the *certain reality*, the *perfect degree*, and the *endless duration*, of the happiness or misery, which the soul, in its future state of existence, is to enjoy or endure, is, in the most strict, LITERAL sense, absolutely true.

Hence it follows, as a universal rule; That, respecting the particular mode or *manner*, in which eternal happiness or misery is to be enjoyed or endured, every representation, which is most properly calculated to affect the heart, and lead the imagination to enlarge its views, to the utmost extent of its capacity, may always be safely admitted, without any danger of error. For it is impossible, that any such representation, whether it is taken in a literal, or a figurative sense, should ever *exceed* the REAL TRUTH.

The practical use, which is to be made of what has now been observed, may be illustrated by referring to what is said, in the sacred writings, with respect to the *manner*, in which the finally impenitent are to receive their future punishment. We will suppose, then, that after your having been accustomed, for some time, to confine your views to the *literal sense* of those representations, that are given, relative to this awful subject, you are, at length, either by your own speculations, or by arguments, which others have suggested to your mind, led to conclude, That those representations, according to

their *literal* import, cannot be admitted, as constituting a part of any system, that is worthy of your rational belief; and, in consequence of this, you make a most rash, violent, and dangerous attempt to reject the whole, as being nothing but a mere delusion; or, admitting it to be a reality, you endeavour to persuade yourself, that it is far less dreadful, than what is represented. Hence you come to a determination to set *reason* as a guard, to prevent *imagination* from running to excess. But it ought to be considered: That such a method of proceeding is intirely wrong, and directly the reverse of what you ought to pursue. Instead of perverting your reason, in the exercise of doubtful disputations, with regard to the question, "How the wretched victims of Almighty vengeance can be cast into a LAKE OF FIRE, and there lie for ever consuming, but yet never be consumed:" you ought to admit it as a leading, incontrovertible principle; That, whatever may be the particular *manner*, according to which, future punishment will, in the final result, be inflicted or endured, yet all the descriptions, that language can ever express, or imagination conceive, as they relate to the *absolute certainty*, the *perfect degree*, and the *endless duration*, of the PUNISHMENT ITSELF, are most *strictly true*.

Let this principle be admitted, and steadily maintained, and then a firm foundation will be laid for reason and imagination always to act in concert. Though, with respect to temporal objects, it is, as we have already observed, often requisite, that imagination should be controlled by reason, that it may be confined within its proper limits; yet the case, respecting the solemn realities of futurity, is essentially different. For, in this case, the

objects, not being temporal, but eternal, are of boundless extent. And therefore, the imagination, instead of being laid under any restraint, requires all the aid, that reason, or any other faculties of the soul, all conspiring, with united force, can possibly supply.

We have taken a view of the soul, during its union with the body, and have attended it to the last stage of its existence, in its introductory state. We have seen that noble fabric, the body, once exhibiting, beyond all others in the material system, the most curious, and the most wonderful specimen of the great Creator's infinite wisdom and inimitable skill, now totally demolished, and united with the general mass of inanimate matter....of that, therefore, we have, at present, no more to say..... Leaving the body, then, we shall turn our attention to the state of the *SOUL*, which has now, if never before, met its final destiny.

“*SIN*, when it is *FINISHED*, bringeth forth *DEATH* :” That is, the death of the *body*, universally ; and, *in some cases*, the death of the *SOUL*. Respecting a case of *this kind*, we shall now make a few observations ; in which, since, in the course of this work, we have already said so much on the subject, we shall here be very brief. And the reader, in order to have a right understanding of the nature and cause of the eternal death of the soul, must pay a special attention to the *PRINCIPLES* (that have been exhibited in the preceding pages, and are interwoven through the whole) from which that tremendous *CONSEQUENCE*, which is now to be described, naturally flows. In the case, a brief description of which is now to be given, the destroyer, or, which is the same, the Deity's destroying power, consisting in the possibility of being

eternally miserable, continues to attend the soul, to the very last ; or, till sin, finishing its whole work, by the introduction of a perfect degree of falsehood into the mental system, actually brings on the fatal crisis, which involves the soul's eternal destiny. At this awful moment (dreadful, beyond the reach of all conception !) the Deity, originally sustaining the character of the "one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," removes that *balance* (relative to endless happiness and misery) which, from all eternity, he had previously continued to hold, by intirely *remitting* his SAVING, and *retaining* his DESTROYING POWER. And, therefore, the soul, being eternally deprived of its only *Saviour*, and left alone with the *destroyer*, sinks, at once, into a state of irrecoverable ruin ; and must continue to sink....FOR EVER. For, a full measure of INIQUITY, having once been present, without any counteractive principle, then immediately retires from the *present* to the *past*, and there fixes its final and eternal residence ; continually extending its influence from the PAST to the PRESENT, and thus for ever operating in the production of *negative perception* ; that is, *pain* or *misery*. And when it has produced one degree of pain, it will immediately produce a second, in addition to the first ; then a third ; and thus continue to add new degrees, through endless duration. All this the soul, being intirely divested of every *counteractive* principle, and therefore, being reduced to a perfectly *helpless* and *hopeless* state, must for ever endure, without being capable of making the least resistance.

The description, which is here given, respecting the final state of the soul, in that particular case, which has been under consideration, is not *figurative* ; but it is most

strictly true, in a *literal sense*. Now, in order that *imagination*, which, *in this case*, can never transgress its proper bounds, may conspire with *reason*, to present the mind with a conception, as lively as possible, of the tremendous reality, that has been described, *figurative language* may properly be introduced. And since the soul, being in the situation, that has been described, is absolutely cut off from all connexion, and from all communication, or intercourse, with the external state of things, it may be represented, as being eternally confined to a dreadful PRISON; as being attended with a WORM, that NEVER DIES, and as being in the midst of an UNQUENCHABLE FIRE; even a LAKE of UNFATHOMABLE DEPTH, that BURNS, and will for ever continue to BURN, with FIRE and BRIMSTONE. Such representations as these, may, indeed, be said to *vary* from the real truth; but then it must always be remembered, that the *variation* universally consists, not in *excess*, but in *defect*. These representations, or any others, that the language of mortals can possibly furnish, never can be the occasion of any deception, by leading the mind to believe *more* than what is most strictly and absolutely true. For, instead of implying *more*, they imply *less*, far *less*, than what is actually implied in the *literal reality* of the objects described.

With regard to this awful subject, therefore, imagination, with the aid of all the most striking descriptions, that language can afford, may exert its whole strength, without ever being able to exceed the bounds of the real truth, of which it attempts to form a conception. Consequently, respecting the tremendous reality, which has now been considered, every *objection*, that ever can pos-

sibly be raised, against any description, as being overstrained, is, from the very nature of the case, absolutely *erroneous*.

We have observed ; That iniquity having once taken its fixed residence in the past, will continually transmit its influence from the past to the present, producing pain or misery, in one degree after another, in proportion as the *past*, in consequence of its incessantly receiving new supplies from the *future*, is for ever extending its length of duration. This being a literal reality, a most amazing object is presented to view, sufficient to give full scope to the most vigorous imagination ; it is an object, however, which imagination, with the utmost exertion of all its powers, and with all the aid, it can ever receive, can never reach. Yet some assistance may be obtained, by the use of *figurative language*, so as to furnish the mind with a faint glimpse of that awful reality, which, in its full extent, surpasses all conception. Let it be considered, then, That TIME, flowing in endless succession from the future to the present, and from the present to the past, may be called “the BREATH of the Lord.” Then, in order that we may form, respecting the dismal habitation of the soul, experiencing the inexpressible horrors of the second death, some conception, very imperfect, indeed, in its utmost extent, but *really true*, as far as it extends, we may join with the prophet and say : “Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king it is prepared : he hath made it deep and large ; the pile thereof is FIRE and much WOOD, the BREATH OF THE LORD, like a STREAM OF BRIMSTONE, doth *kindle* it.” (Isa. xxx. 33.) It is, therefore, far, very far, from being a poetical fiction. to describe THE DREARY MANSION, where

the soul, after having once been forsaken by the Saviour, must for ever reside, by calling it,

“ A DUNGEON, horrible on all sides round ;
 “ As one great furnace flamed....yet from these flames
 “ No light, but rather darkness visible
 “ Serves only to discover sights of wo !
 “ Regions of sorrow ! doleful shades ! where peace
 “ And rest can NEVER dwell : hope NEVER comes :
 “ but torture, WITHOUT END,
 “ Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed
 “ With ever burning sulphur unconsumed.”

MILTON.

We shall now turn away from these scenes of horror, and proceed to take a view of a case, which is directly opposite to that, which has just been described. And, in the case, which we are now to consider, the destroyer, who naturally attends the soul, in the first stage of its existence, is, by the special, efficacious influence of the Holy Spirit, destroyed ; and consequently the soul, previous to sin's having finished its work, in bringing forth death, by the introduction of a perfect degree of falsehood, has an indissoluble union with the Saviour. And, this being the case, the whole foundation of eternal death is intirely removed, and eternal life is unalterably confirmed. Sin, therefore, having its league, with the “ power of darkness,” utterly broken, without any possibility of its ever being renewed, can do nothing more than only to introduce temporal death. But here all description intirely fails, when, by the use of it, any attempt is made to exhibit an adequate view of *your* case, whoever you may be, that are in this happy condition. Your eye hath not seen, nor your ear heard, nor can your imagination, con-

tinually acquiring new strength, through countless millions of ages, conceive the greatness of that felicity, which you are to enjoy; and to which you have, even now, an infallible title.

You was once exposed to the infinite danger of intirely losing the life of your soul; for you was in a state of spiritual death, and, therefore, was totally destitute of eternal life. And though you was attended with the Redeemer, who continually preserved you from immediate destruction; yet you had no SECURITY; for you was also attended with "the God of this world," with whom sin, being in league, was hastening to finish its work, by introducing a perfect degree of falsehood, and thus bring on the fatal catastrophe. But you have now most happily escaped, in having been the subject of a glorious and *essential change*, effected by special, efficacious divine influence, and consisting in what is called *regeneration*; or that *new birth*, without which no one can ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. For by that *power*, with which the *Deity* has from all eternity been invested, *you gave your consent* to *his* introducing that *special volition*, by which the Redeemer fell, that, by falling, he might rise again, in that counteractive, all-conquering influence of the Holy Spirit, by which the destroyer is now fallen to rise no more. The whole foundation, therefore, for SIN ever to do any thing more, than only to introduce temporary evil, is intirely overthrown. And the whole, that *sin* can ever do, is to finish its work by giving entrance to a perfect degree of falsehood, so as to dissolve the present union between the body and the mind; and thus introduce that *iniquity*, which, were you not indissolubly united to the Deity's *saving power*, that is, the ever dear, and adorable SAVIOUR, would eternally continue to ope-

rate, in the production of misery, for ever increasing, by progressive degrees, but which will, by HIM, be IMMEDIATELY COUNTERACTED ; so that it can have no other effect, but only what will consist in one momentary pain, with which will finally end all your sin and sufferings, leaving no possibility of your being ever again, in any degree subjected to their dominion.

Whether your *soul*, after the present vital union has once been dissolved, will ever again be united to the same individual *body*, consisting of the same identical particles, as the one which you will leave, when you make the solemn transition from time into eternity ; is a question, intirely of a speculative nature, and of no interesting importance. For the body, which you now have, as soon as it is deserted by the mind, will be, in no respect any better than any other mass of inanimate matter. But since a real material body, of some kind or other, will be necessary, as an instrument or medium, by which an eternal series of positive perceptions may be produced, and presented to the mind (because it is peculiar to the Deity alone to have positive perception, without the intervention of any medium) therefore, it may be admitted, as a principle of indubitable truth : That the all-wise and all-powerful Creator, your infinitely kind Friend and most indulgent Father, will provide for you a body, which will be calculated, in the best manner possible to happify your soul. It will be composed of materials, so curiously wrought, and so exquisitely refined, as to exceed, in excellence and beauty, all that you have ever seen, or can see, in the present world. It will not, like the one which you now possess, consist of flesh and blood, requiring food and nourishment ; but it will be of an incorruptible, and immortal nature ; and therefore it may

be called, *a spiritual body*. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. For flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible, shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then will be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?.... The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 44, &c.)

Your manner of existing, in a future state, will be entirely different from that, in which you now exist. For you will not then be, as you are now, conveyed from place to place, by a series of mechanical operations, originating in a particular succession of voluntary motions; which, having been begun, one after another, in a certain part of the body, are thence communicated, according to the laws of mechanism, to the other parts, which are connected with that, in which each voluntary motion successively begins. But you will, according to your desires, be transported from one part of the universe to another, with the ease and swiftness of a thought. And since you will then be furnished with a real material body, sensible objects, more grand and sublime, than you have ever yet seen, or conceived, will, in the most agreeable succession, be presented to your astonished view.... You will be entertained with musick, proceeding from instruments or voices, and flowing in such rapturous strains, as would, if once heard in this state of mortality,

be sufficiently powerful to instantly dissolve the vital union. And in this divine, this heavenly employment, you will be completely qualified to take an active part.... You will have full opportunity and *time*, or rather ETERNITY, to contemplate, with increasing wonder and delight, the magnificent works of the great Creator, in the various parts of his boundless dominion.... And not only your outward senses, in having a most easy, extensive, and pleasing correspondence, with all external objects, that are suited to the noble dignity of your elevated rank, in the scale of being, will be completely gratified; but, likewise, all the *intellectual faculties* of your *mind*, being continually more and more strengthened and invigorated, will, by progressive degrees, for ever expand. And, consequently, you will always view, with the increasing rapture of extatick admiration, without any mixture of error, the exquisite beauties of TRUTH, in its purest form. And you will for ever enjoy, without any interruption or disturbance, all the noble pleasures, that can result from social intercourse; and all the endearments of society, in a state of improvement, rising to the highest possible degree of perfection. You will then know, by a far more happy experience, than any, of which you are now capable of being the subject, what is the real nature of the most refined love, and the most generous, exalted friendship. And you will rejoice, not only in your own happiness, and that of all other finite beings, who have a capacity of being happy; but you will, also, from the most pure sympathetick benevolence, for ever rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, in the universal, independent, immutable, and eternal felicity of the infinite JEHOVAH; to whom relate THREE ADORABLE SUB-

SISTENCES; called "the Father," "the Son," and "the Holy Spirit;" which *Three* are to be considered, not as *distinct personal agents*, or *individual conscious beings*; but as PRINCIPLES of ACTION, essentially relating to the ONE Universal, Immutable, and Eternal AGENT, to whom all possible perfection absolutely belongs. And these THREE, essentially subsisting in the nature of the Deity, have a relation to the finite mind, as long as it retains a capacity of happiness. And therefore, they are (especially the Second and the Third) called by names, peculiarly expressive of their respective *offices*, in the grand economy of REDEMPTION. Thus, the Second is often called the *Mediator*, the *Redeemer*, or the *Saviour*; and the Third, the *Sanctifier*, or the *Comforter*. You, therefore, having already an indissoluble union with the Mediator, will always have a free access to the Father, who, through the Son, will for ever continue to enrich your mind, by communicating, in as large a measure, as your finite capacity can receive, the happifying influences of the Holy Spirit. And while you are advancing forward, in endless progression, from stage to stage, in higher and higher degrees of happiness, the most pure, exalted, and refined, you will not think even eternity itself too long to appreciate the inestimable value of the absolute impossibility of your ever being defiled with sin....In this glorious state of perfect holiness and inconceivable happiness, ever being most delightfully employed, in praising your Creator, and celebrating the wonders of redeeming love, you will always remain, through the whole of that interminable duration, which measures the existence of the Deity.

We have now taken a view of the several subjects, to which we proposed to attend. And, that what has been written, may be rightly understood, and have a beneficial effect on the mind of the reader, it must be perused with attention, seriousness, impartiality, and candour. What is designed to be exhibited to view, in the preceding pages, is something *more* than a *mere speculative system*. Some parts of it will readily appear to be of the highest *practical importance*; and if it is connected, in all its parts, then *this* must be the *general character* of the *whole*.

It cannot have escaped the notice of the attentive reader, That the DEITY is every where introduced, as being the Supreme, Universal Agent, in the production of *all effects*, throughout the whole system of *matter* and *mind*. This Universal Divine Agency, however, we have, in the course of this work, fully shown to be of such a nature, as not to infringe, in any degree, the *liberty* of finite agents.

Some, perhaps, may remark; That something ought to have been said, relative to the *divine volition*, as well as *that* which is peculiar to the *finite mind*. In answer to this, it may be observed; That, in treating on the *Divine Agency* which any one, if he chuses, may call *volition*) we have, for the sake of making a proper distinction, used the term, *exertion*, or *exertion of divine power*; and have appropriated the term, VOLITION, to signify *the separation of finite perception from its real object*. It will not however, be difficult, if proper attention is given, to understand the distinction between that Divine Agency, which consists in the *exertion* of the power of the Deity, in remitting possibility on one side, and retaining it on the other, and thus

turning the scale, relative to any particular event ; and that *separation* of finite perception from its real object, for the purpose of expressing which we have appropriated the term, *volition*. There is, indeed, one kind of *separation*, which, in order to distinguish it from all others, may, (if any one is disposed to make use of the term) be denominated DIVINE VOLITION. This consists in the continual successive *separation* of every single, individual TIME from a future ETERNITY. According to this, (see part first, chap. vii. sect. 1.) the Deity, from the essential energy of his own mind, as he is the LIVING GOD, makes time to continually flow, in one endless stream, from the FUTURE to the PRESENT, and from the PRESENT to the PAST. And, this being the case, it is as much impossible, that TIME should be arrested in its course, as it is, that the DEITY should cease to exist.

And now, with proposing to the reader one most important and interesting inquiry, the present work will be brought to a close. You have already commenced an existence, which is never to end. You cannot remove *back*, in a retrograde order, and *be*, as though you had *never been*. You must, therefore, as fast as time is flowing from the future to the present, be continually advancing *forward* into endless futurity. And, till the period shall arrive, when PAST TIME, continually increasing in endless progression, has become equal, in length of duration to a FUTURE ETERNITY, you must retain your own conscious existence, and personal identity. Thus far, in general, *your* state, in common with that of *others*, is NOW fixed by an unalterable decree. You see, by what is contained in the preceding pages of this work, that there are *three* distinct classes of perceptive beings. The respect-

ive cases of *two* of these have just been described ; and, with relation to the *other one*, much has been said in different parts of this volume, which, if you have perused with attention, you will remember.

There is *one* class, including all those, whom the Saviour *once* attended, but has *now* for ever forsaken ; and who, therefore, are now actually reduced to a state of eternal death. There is another class, to which belong all those, who have already been united to the Mediator, by an indissoluble union, whose SOULS, therefore, are in a state of ETERNAL LIFE ; whether their BODIES are among the *living*, or are *deposited* in the *grave*. And the *remaining* class consists of those, who, from their first existence, to the present moment, have been attended by the Redeemer, but have never yet formed with him any vital, essential union ; and who, therefore, though they are not *now* actually in that tremendous state of *eternal death*, which has been already described, yet are *totally destitute* of that *eternal life*, which, unless it is soon secured, will be irrecoverably lost for ever ; and which, being thus, once lost, will leave them in a state of unutterable, and unalterable wo. That you *will*, within a short time, be numbered with one, or the other, of the *two first classes* is certain ; and the question is, To which of the *two last* do you *NOW* belong ? Do you belong to the SECOND, or the THIRD ? *This* is the *all-important inquiry*, which, for your serious consideration, and *practical improvement*, is now to be left with you, at our parting ; after having been, for some time, together ; viewing the awful glories of INFINITE PERFECTION....traversing the extensive regions of those astonishing worlds of MATTER, which are interspersed through the infinitude of

space....and taking a solemn prospect of the amazing scenes, through which the MIND, without any possibility of ever retreating back, is to pass, in its progressive advances through *time* and ETERNITY.

And now, may the divine blessing attend the writer, and the reader; that whenever the scale, involving our final destiny, is actually turned, we may have the infallible SECURITY of a safe passage through this vale of tears and a happy transition from this dark abode of sin and sorrow, to those bright realms above, in which we may

For ever "see, and hear, and know,
 " All we desir'd, or wish'd below;
 " And every power find sweet employ,
 " In that eternal world of joy:

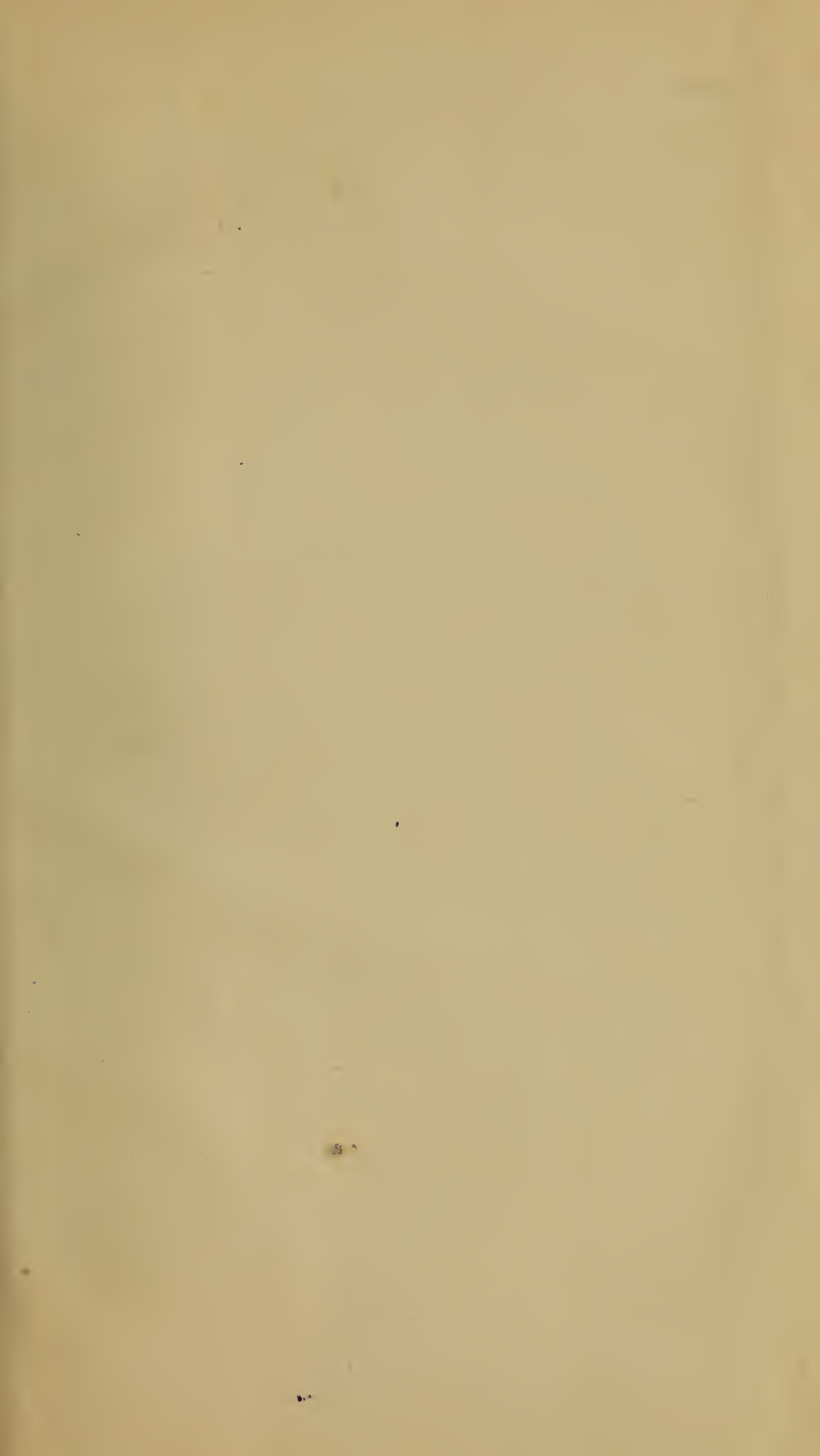
where dwells that infinitely amiable, and adorable Being, who is the Author of our existence; and in whose glorious nature essentially subsists the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To which Sacred THREE in ONE, let all honour, glory, and praise, be eternally ascribed, by all, on *earth*, and all, in HEAVEN. AMEN.

FINIS.

ERRATA.—The reader is requested to correct the following errors, which escaped notice, in a few copies of this work:

Page 86, line 20, *for* out of, *read* unto; page 147, line 7, *for* thinks, *read* things; page 169, line 23, *for* council, *read* counsel; page 316, line 11, *for* qualities, *read* quantities; page 361, line 27, *for* *cr*, *read* or; page 408, line 28, *for* off *read* all; page 471, line 21, *for* of three, *read* of the three; page 591, line 25, *for* lost death, *read* lost in death.

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